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President: Ms. Chatardová (President) ..... (Czechia)
later: Mr. Mahmadaminov (Vice-President) ..... (Tajikistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

(b) High-level policy dialogue with international financial and trade institutions (E/2018/50)

1. **Mr. Vondráček** (Speaker, Chamber of Deputies, Czechia), delivering the keynote address, said that 2018 marked the centennial of the foundation of the independent and sovereign Czechoslovak State. A founding member of the United Nations, Czechoslovakia had upheld the principles of democracy, freedom, self-belief, peace, justice and multilateralism since its inception. From 1989, Czechoslovakia had reoriented its foreign policy to pursue multilateral initiatives. Its successor State, the Czech Republic, actively participated in United Nations activities and supported initiatives that promoted global stability and prosperity.

2. The Council was ideally equipped to enable countries to exchange best practices and lessons learned in addressing such global phenomena as migration, demographic shifts, terrorism, inequality, armed conflicts and political oppression. A textbook example of the journey from poverty to progress, the Czech Republic had undergone radical economic and social development. The country's successful transformation had been facilitated by its acceptance of political pluralism, parliamentary democracy and a market economy. Its poverty rate was the lowest in the European Union, and success stories could be found in all sectors of Czech society.

3. Helping to build suitable, resilient and inclusive societies through the participation of all stakeholders was the main priority of the Council presidency of the Czech Republic. International cooperation must be promoted to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations, Governments and people, who must be encouraged to believe that the international community could make a real difference, even in difficult circumstances. In order to ensure the efficiency of concerted action, activities must be coordinated with all relevant actors. Moreover, finding solutions to local crises and global challenges also required open discussions about the rule of law; strong, transparent and accountable institutions; and, above all, a willingness to work together and listen to one another. In closing, he expressed gratitude for the Council's guidance in open international dialogue.

4. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that it was worth contemplating what the world would look like in 2030 or 2050 if countries continued to favour business-as-usual policy models. Since 2010, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs had developed its own models to create long-term, fully integrated scenarios for climate, land, energy, water, materials, infrastructure, technology systems and development up to 2030 and 2050. The Department had also worked closely with the scientific community, most notably on the World in 2050 initiative. If the international community persisted in giving the highest priority to economic growth, the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and longer-term sustainable development aspirations would remain elusive despite the great progress made in many related areas, particularly through technological advances in such fields as artificial intelligence.

5. As the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a mere three years old, world leaders must be alerted to the prospect of alarming future scenarios. Demographic changes would have a significant impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, given the essential role of people in sustainable development. According to the latest Revision of World Population Prospects, prepared by the Department, global population growth had slowed while many least developed countries continued to experience rapid population growth, with the fastest growth projected for countries that faced the greatest challenges in ending poverty and hunger and ensuring access to health care, education and decent work for all.

6. The Department projected in its 2018 Revision of the World Urbanization Prospects that the increase in the global population would mainly be reflected in the growth of urban areas and an increasingly crowded urban world, with some 70 per cent of the planet's 2050 population of nine billion expected to be living in cities. The demographic boom would require the construction of another 400 megacities in and around existing cities. While an additional two billion people would be lifted out of poverty and hunger, such rapid progress would merely compensate for the growing world population, leaving three billion people to live on fewer than two dollars a day — roughly the same number as currently lived on that amount.

7. Some 240 million people, most of them in rural areas, would likely remain without access to improved water resources, and 1.4 billion people would continue to lack access to basic sanitation. Despite rapid advances in many countries, 1.8 billion people would remain without access to modern energy services for cooking and heating. Millions would continue to be excluded from overall improvements in global health,

but universal primary and secondary education would likely be achieved by 2050.

8. Gross world product would reach $300 trillion or more, with Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS countries) accounting for nearly half of it. A global middle class would emerge amid abject poverty. With global average gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at around $35,000, incomes in most countries would be on par with those of developed countries at present, but some of the most vulnerable and poorest economies would remain marginalized. While impressive, crop yields and efficiencies in terms of energy, water and materials would continue to be outstripped by increasing demand. Fossil fuels would remain an important energy source despite the significant increase in renewable energy use. Steadily increasing atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions and concentrations would lead to a rise of 3°C to 6°C in global temperature. Water demand would increase by 55 per cent, with limited scope for increasing irrigation in the face of competing demands. Severe water stress would be experienced by 3.9 billion people living in river basins, and 6.9 billion people would experience some water stress. Floods would be a risk for 1.6 billion people, with the value of assets at risk quadrupling to $45 trillion. Continued pollution by industry, including through toxic chemicals, would lead to an increase in the global burden of disease attributable to hazardous chemicals. Urban air quality would continue to deteriorate.

9. The agricultural land area was expected to increase until 2030 and decline thereafter. Deforestation rates would likely continue to decline, but most primary forests could be destroyed by mid-century. While a growing number of land and marine areas were protected, overfishing beyond the maximum sustainable yield, ocean warming, acidification and habitat degradation were likely to persist, bringing about a global collapse of wild-catch ocean fisheries, which would be replaced by aquaculture. Many of the so-called planetary boundaries were expected to be breached. Irreversible environmental events were of increasing concern, and biodiversity loss was expected to continue unabated. All in all, the mixed picture that emerged from the Department's work on sustainable development scenarios indicated that the incremental approach adopted to date would yield short-term progress while also resulting in long-term deterioration in other areas.

10. According to the most recent forecast set out in the World Economic Situation and Prospects, published by the Department, gross world product was expected to expand by 3.2 per cent in 2018 and 2019, reflecting a further improvement in the 2018 growth outlook for developed economies. The generally positive macroeconomic conditions gave policymakers an opportunity to make meaningful progress towards achieving the Goals, thereby raising living standards on a large scale, especially in developing countries.

11. However, the parallel rise in economic risks, including increasingly unilateral trade measures that challenged the multilateral trading system, must be met with efforts to revitalize a global partnership for sustainable development and build a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and multilateral trading system. Stronger economic growth was not sufficient to ensure that those gains were widely shared. As recognized in Goal 10, reducing inequality within and among countries was essential to inclusive growth, shared prosperity and well-being. The recent acceleration in economic growth had an environmental cost. At the current rate, measures to combat climate change would not suffice to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Moving towards more positive future scenarios would necessitate the kind of transformative action that the Goals demanded. The integration of the Goals and the commitment to leave no one behind would require innovative thinking and new policy and financing approaches.

12. To conclude, long-term sustainable development scenarios could help identify promising pathways forward; finding answers to long-term challenges would have far-reaching effects on the global economy and on the future of sustainable development. Alarming prospective scenarios should inform joint efforts by Governments and other stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Panel discussion: "Trends in the global economy and international trade and finance"

13. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance and Urban Sustainability Directors Network), moderator, noting that countries were not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, said that taken together, alarming global trends of rising inequality, declining peace and record-breaking extreme weather linked to climate change demanded a collective response that went beyond business as usual and forced all stakeholders to leave their comfort zones.

14. **Mr. Kituyi** (Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)), panellist, said that the guarded global optimism that had reigned at the end of 2017, the first year for a decade in which international trade had grown faster than global

GDP, had been dampened by reduced growth forecasts worldwide, the somewhat positive outlook in developing economies notwithstanding. However, the rising and persistent drumbeat of trade war, whose futility was well-established, was causing more than anxiety; the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had projected that major tariff wars between the main trade partners would cost the global economy up to $400 billion by 2020. Multilateralism was under similar stress, as evidenced by the deletion from the ministerial declaration adopted by the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the reference to an open, inclusive, rules-based, negotiated trading system, a consensus taken for granted since the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Current anxieties were reflected in the reorganization of the corporate world; recent mergers between massive manufacturing companies, shrinking margins and the growing cost of the final product for consumers would place pressure on smaller players, particularly developing-country-based producers, to become part of the larger corporations.

15. The UNCTAD 2018 World Investment Report outlined a number of important trends. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in greenfield projects was faltering, contrary to the expectation that it would be a driver of efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. In 2017, global FDI had declined by 23 per cent. More importantly, the most significant amount of FDI flows was in mergers and acquisitions, with limited impact on creating new livelihoods and pulling people out of poverty. The largest FDI flow was now in Asia, the only region with a significant amount of FDI in new greenfield projects. In 2017, for the first time since 1983, more international investment agreements had been dissolved than signed. Moreover, the current situation challenged the traditional expectation that the integration of global value chains would allow countries to replicate the Chinese model of reducing poverty through trade; those chains were being shortened by rising nationalism, the possibilities of new technology and tariff confrontations.

16. At $230 trillion, global debt amounted to three times global GDP, a particularly distressing phenomenon at a time when the corporate debt of emerging economies and the sovereign debt of the poorest countries, only 11 of which were free from medium-term debt distress, appeared increasingly unsustainable. Affirming a belief in international engagement on global responsibilities for the 2030 Agenda, he called for discussions about sovereign debt workout mechanisms to be mainstreamed and for debt sustainability mechanisms to be examined anew.

17. Free financial and goods and services markets had been promoted as an economic panacea but had instead resulted in unequal globalization that had brought problems for the middle class. Trade was perceived as an easy solution, but such problems were in fact inherently unrelated to trade, and could not be solved through trade rules. Ultimately, the 2030 Agenda was being held hostage in that standoff; for instance, UNCTAD had been working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on a plan to impose discipline in fisheries subsidies, with a view to establishing a blue economy in line with Sustainable Development Goal 14.6. Despite general agreement and the absence of opposition from any major power, the current deadlock at the World Trade Organization (WTO) was impeding further progress on the initiative.

18. In providing businesses with incentives to invest more sustainably, it was important to speak directly to rather than for the business sector. The UNCTAD initiative on sustainable stock exchanges had demonstrated that, when corporations were encouraged to develop and uphold their own managed standards of conduct, they began to invest and perfect one another. Allowing corporations to determine their ambitions for sustainability could be far more productive than speaking on their behalf and deciding on responsibilities for them.

19. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs), panellist, said that in order to confront the trade war phenomenon and improve the overall trading system, it would be necessary to adopt a radically new approach that captured the fundamental changes that trade itself had undergone in the previous decade. No longer limited to the sale of goods, trade had become closely interconnected with investment and production, with all countries interlinked in the chains of manufacturing trade and consumption and production. The bilateral investment treaty that the United States and Chinese Governments had begun to negotiate several years earlier had been an example of that modified approach; despite the United States Government's current reluctance to conclude a free trade agreement with China, the bilateral investment treaty would have facilitated even freer trade, as the two countries were trading partners in the same chain of production and consumption.

20. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and current coordinator, United Nations Regional Commissions), panellist, said that the current

global climate was one of uncertainty and increasing tensions related to globalization. Growth in the major economic blocs, while a positive development, had not translated into gains for all. Globalization had resulted in job losses for the middle classes in the United States of America and Europe, and its benefits had largely accrued to the wealthiest 1 per cent and the middle classes of emerging economies. The industrial policy through which the current United States president was attempting to bring companies, jobs and technology back to his country, with significant repercussions in the rest of the world, was intended to address those tensions and in fact resembled the policies that ECLAC had been recommending for Latin American and Caribbean countries.

21. The technological and digital revolution was another important trend, albeit one concentrated in a small number of companies. The actual dissemination of technology was narrow, and it was unclear how regions like Latin America and the Caribbean would benefit from the newest forms of technology in terms of jobs and in general. Strenuous efforts were under way to assess the region's standing in terms of the Internet, infrastructure and technology. While the region as a whole was lagging significantly behind other parts of the world, measures that could be taken included establishing collaboration among the private sector, the public sector, transnational technology companies and infrastructure companies; investing in updated infrastructure; and adapting to the dramatic changes in trade, from tangible to intangible goods and services, brought about by the technological revolution.

22. She was concerned that Mexico and China were escalating the trade war by imposing retaliatory tariffs. Handling the present situation in such a counterproductive manner would adversely affect the entire region in the case of Mexico. At the high-level political forum, no answer had been provided to the fundamental question of how to meet the funding requirements for the 2030 Agenda, which ranged between $2.5 trillion and $5 trillion per year. With official development assistance (ODA) at a scant $142 billion and the $160 billion in foreign direct investment in Latin America and the Caribbean going into the private sector, it remained unclear how sustainable development priorities would be funded. One funding proposal addressed the inability of middle-income countries to secure concessional funding, which they sorely needed in order to graduate from middle-income status. Another proposal sought to address the crisis resulting from tax evasion, which cost the region $340 billion per year, a staggering 6.7 per cent of GDP. Because the issue was an international one involving the progressive monopolization of the economy by corporations, direct engagement with developed countries and the international community was vital in recovering the $110 billion taken from the region each year through illicit pricing and other tax evasion schemes.

23. To improve the governance of natural resources, direct engagement with transnational corporations that invested in extractive industries was necessary to establish a baseline level of tax to be paid in the countries where profits were made, in addition to the tax paid to the countries under whose jurisdiction those corporations operated, in line with measures to curb base erosion and profit shifting. Moreover, the taxes paid in the countries where profits were made must be redistributed. Secondly, negotiations between the extractive industries and local communities were the responsibility of the Government, not of the local communities. Thirdly, use should be made of technologies that mitigated the impact of extractive industries. Fourthly, economies and industries should be diversified further.

24. Such institutions as ECLAC should bring the 2030 Agenda to the attention of the very wealthy, many of whom had expressed a willingness to participate but did not know how to do so. While transnational corporations in the region were more aware of their responsibilities with regard to the Agenda, it would be necessary to involve the private sector at the national level. Any discussion with the wealthy must address the urgent matter of tax evasion, a serious problem in many Latin American countries, and make clear the need to abandon the culture of privilege to which the wealthy had grown accustomed. Public goods could be provided only by a well-financed State, not by private companies, hence the need for the rich to meet their tax obligations. In that connection, corruption was another issue that must be addressed throughout the region.

25. **Mr. Kono** (Deputy Secretary-General, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)), panellist, said that OECD had been doing its utmost to tackle tax evasion and illicit finance, in particular through its Tax Inspectors Without Borders project and the promotion of adherence to international standards. Efforts to that end must be intensified.

26. The world economy had continued to grow, and global growth was projected to approach 4 per cent in 2018 and 2019, according to the OECD economic outlook. The centre of gravity of the world economy was shifting to the developing world, where 26 countries had moved from the low-income to the middle-income category and 14 countries had moved from the middle-

income to the high-income category since 2000. An unprecedented period of growth had lifted millions out of poverty and moved many families into the global middle class for the first time. Despite the undeniable progress, inequalities continued to grow in both the developing and the developed worlds; in OECD countries, the average income of the richest 10 per cent of the population was roughly 10 times that of the poorest 10 per cent. In addition, for many households in the countries most affected by the economic and financial crisis, disposable income remained lower than before the crisis, and wage growth remained stubbornly low. The overall lack of inclusive growth was fuelling tensions and populism and putting the multilateral, rules-based global system to the test.

27. In an unprecedentedly interconnected world, international cooperation and multilateralism must be strengthened and re-established to cope with those trends. The slow pace of efforts to update global rules and coordinate industrial policies had engendered considerable frustration and given rise to new trade and investment restrictions that imperilled growth prospects and the ability to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. It was therefore vital to reconsider the policies that would enable the international community to achieve the Goals.

28. OECD had formulated an action plan on the Sustainable Development Goals and wished to share the best practices in that area with the global community. OECD ministers had identified strategies to invest in people, support business dynamism, create inclusive labour markets and build efficient and responsive governance. The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, while not binding, were an international standard that the organization worked to disseminate. To conclude, OECD would endeavour to strengthen coordination and break silos in the effort to achieve the Goals, a task incumbent upon all.

29. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance and Urban Sustainability Directors Network) said that he would welcome additional examples of structural reforms to be carried out by 2060 in order to help improve living standards. He also asked panellists for their opinions on the policy of universal basic income, which former United States president Barack Obama had recently endorsed.

30. **Mr. Kono** (Deputy Secretary-General, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)) said that while he could not comment on the specific content of the universal basic income policy, additional efforts were required to promote inclusiveness and contend with widening inequalities, whether through tax systems, social security regimes or other schemes. The OECD, in its study entitled "The Long View: Scenarios for the World Economy to 2060", had shown that improving the quality of governance and raising educational attainment in the BRICS countries — both fully achievable aims — to the current average level in OECD countries would raise living standards by 30 to 50 per cent by 2060. Making product market regulation more competition-friendly, improving labour market policy settings and linking increases in pensionable ages to life expectancy could also enhance living standards. It would therefore be vital to focus on policies that could effect such changes. Lastly, if trade liberalization were to regress, long-term living standards could decline by at least 14 per cent in the most affected countries.

31. **Ms. Bárcena** (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and current coordinator, United Nations Regional Commissions) said that the Commission, which strongly endorsed the universal basic income policy, was examining whether and how the policy might be implemented and carefully analysing the cost of doing so. The unconditional payment of a basic income conferred dignity on the recipients, who were freed from mere subsistence to participate more actively in the economy, innovate and take risks. The policy had enjoyed considerable success among the elderly in the region.

32. **Mr. Gillsäter** (Special Representative of the World Bank Group to the United Nations), panellist, said that the world had made impressive, if uneven, development progress in recent decades. Life expectancy had increased by over six years since 1993, the share of children out of school had been reduced by around 50 per cent and maternal mortality was down by 44 per cent. Those positive trends notwithstanding, future poverty reduction efforts would face a number of challenges. First, high inequality threatened social cohesion and increased the risk of violence, often across borders. Moreover, the poor were increasingly concentrated in fragile and conflict-affected regions. Secondly, disruptive technologies were changing what it meant to be competitive, making the availability of low-cost labour comparatively less important. The traditional post-1945 manufacturing development model might soon become obsolete. Thirdly, rapid population growth was outpacing job creation in many low-income countries, where poverty was most prevalent. Fourthly, urbanization was proceeding apace but needed to be better managed as people flocked to low-productivity service jobs and slums continued to expand. Fifthly, climate change disproportionately affected the poor, in terms of both their exposure to risks

and their ability to adapt. Sixthly, conflicts were likely to remain frequent by historical standards and continue to affect a wider spectrum of countries. Seventhly, such forces as increased global connectedness could also unleash more frequent disruptions to countries across the development path through the spread of pandemics, humanitarian crises or economic shocks. Environmental issues, including water scarcity and soil degradation, were reducing productivity. Eighthly, the alarming accumulation of public and corporate debt had placed an increasing number of countries at risk of debt distress, hence the need for greater coordination between public and corporate borrowing.

33. The collaborative work of international organizations in analysing and addressing the global challenges of population growth and urbanization in the age of climate change exemplified the strength of multilateralism, which was the only way of managing those challenges. For its part, the World Bank had published an inventory of its activities in support of the 2030 Agenda, in partnership with the United Nations system, the private sector, civil society and academia. Lastly, the President of the World Bank had recently concluded a strategic partnership framework with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The framework focused on implementing and financing the 2030 Agenda, climate action, the humanitarian-development nexus and the linkages between that nexus and peace and the data revolution.

34. Up to 2030 and beyond, all stakeholders, including the World Bank, would have to adapt to particular challenges as they arose. In response to that imperative, World Bank member countries had approved a capital increase of $13 billion that would afford the institution greater financial power in the years to come.

35. **Mr. Robinson** (Deputy Director, African Department, International Monetary Fund), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that accelerated global economic growth in 2017 had given way to a more differentiated scenario in 2018, with advanced economies other than the United States experiencing a slight slowdown. Such global economic risks as uncertainty related to trade; exorbitant debt, estimated at $230 trillion for 2017; monetary policy normalization, including rising interest rates, as countries recovered from the financial crisis; climate change; and technology had important implications for employment and for inequality within and between countries and between genders.

36. In recent months, with regard to debt, capital had begun to flow out of rather than into emerging markets, placing significant pressures on such countries as Argentina, Turkey and South Africa. Net financial flows into sub-Saharan Africa over the previous few years had exceeded flows into emerging markets, partly as a result of access to private financing. Such changes in global markets could lead to risks.

37. Between 1970 and 2000, economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa had been stagnant, followed by 15 years of uninterrupted, strong growth. The commodity price shock and other factors had subsequently halted growth for the previous three years. It remained to be seen whether the current stagnation would last for decades, as it had from the 1970s to 2000, or whether it would give way to another period of growth that would, in turn, facilitate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

38. While most of the rest of the world had experienced a demographic dividend and stagnating population growth, Africa was witnessing a massive, rapid increase in the number of people reaching working age, from 15 to 64 years old. In order to absorb that influx of labourers, Africa would have to create from 18 to 20 million jobs a year, compared to the 10 million jobs that had been created over the previous decade and a half. The enormous shift would have implications for African approaches to technology; whereas the advanced economies resorted to automation to compensate for declining populations and maintain growth prospects, in Africa it would be necessary to find ways to maintain job creation alongside the emergence of new technologies. In the preceding three years, the median share of national revenue used to pay off interest on loans had increased from 4 to 8 per cent. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number of low-income countries at high risk of or in debt distress had increased from 6 to 15.

39. No single measure would increase the resilience of low-income countries and least developed countries to economic and other crises, particularly given the global outlook of rising interest rates, increasingly tight access to international capital markets and general uncertainty in terms of policy frameworks. Focus must turn to what individual countries and low-income countries as a group could accomplish, as exemplified by the push for African integration through the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area. It was essential to ensure that such initiatives translated into policies. Furthermore, domestic economies must be strengthened through the promotion of fiscal responsibility and the mobilization of revenues to finance the 2030 Agenda, assisted by the creative use of new technologies.

40. *Mr. Mahmadaminov (Tajikistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

41. **Mr. Teh** (Chief of Section, Economic Research and Statistics, at the World Trade Organization (WTO)), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that it was necessary to look at the 15-year process that had followed the publication of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to make accurate predictions about the future. Although the progress made in the achievement of the MDGs indicated that the world could reasonably expect to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, there were many emerging challenges to inclusiveness. The preceding 15 years had seen rapid economic growth in the developing world, which had reduced the gap between per capita GDP in developing countries and the rest of the world. The share of the world economy that was captured by developing countries had increased from 43 per cent to 56 per cent in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Similarly, the share of developing countries in world trade had risen from about one third in 2000 to about one half in 2012. There was a clear, positive correlation between increases in GDP and trade growth.

42. Although many countries had achieved or surpassed the MDGs before the 2015 deadline, least developed countries had faced significantly more challenges in that regard. The current share of least developed countries in global trade still hovered at around 1 per cent. WTO had been instrumental in creating a predictable, rules-based trading system that allowed many countries to actively participate in the global economy, consequently lifting millions out of poverty. Reasonable optimism was therefore warranted regarding the achievement of the economic targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

43. The WTO report entitled "Trade in 2030", to be published in October 2018, would examine the impact of digital technologies on global trade and inclusiveness. By 2030, WTO expected a shift from trade in goods to trade in services, and the expansion of trade as digital technologies lowered the costs of transactions and of searching for products. Although concerns remained about the ability of low-income countries and less skilled workers to adapt to those technologies, the outcome would depend on the interplay between the forces involved. For example, many people were concerned that three-dimensional printing would reduce the participation of developing countries in global value chains; however, if trade costs fell rapidly enough, such printing would not necessarily result in the reshoring of production. However, stark digital divides persisted between developed and developing countries, and sometimes within countries and between urban and rural communities, men and women, and skilled and unskilled workers. Unless countries prioritized the mitigation of those divides, inclusiveness would continue to be a challenge.

44. WTO analyses of recent tariff increases on steel and aluminium suggested that, if current trade skirmishes continued to be confined to specific areas, the damage to the global economy and world trade would be around one third of a per cent. It was a matter of more concern that such trade policies increased uncertainty regarding national commitments to multilateral trade rules. Simulations conducted by WTO had estimated that such uncertainty would cause four times as much damage as direct tariffs. It was therefore essential to contain trade disputes and encourage discussion among the parties involved, including through bilateral trade agreements and multilaterally through WTO and other international organizations. Many trade measures were taken as a result of a perceived lack of reciprocity; discussions should therefore focus on such measures and restore mutual trust.

Panel discussion: "Projections and visions on the advancement of sustainable development"

45. **Mr. Oumarou** (Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships at the International Labour Organization (ILO)), panellist, said that the world faced rapid changes that were unprecedented in scope, including climate change, globalization, technological innovations, demographic shifts and migration flows. Those changes affected the world of work and would have direct consequences for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

46. The world consumed more resources than it replenished, and produced more waste than it could absorb, but almost 40 per cent of all jobs were directly related to water, a resource with a potentially huge impact on the achievement of the Goals and on employment around the world. On account of climate change, cereal production in Africa was predicted to drop by 2 per cent by 2030, which would affect agricultural employment and sustainable development more broadly. Consideration must be given to the ways in which different models of production and economic structures could address the interlinked issues of employment and the environment. As a new, environmentally responsible economic model emerged, it was likely that new jobs would emerge while others would disappear. More jobs could be saved if the environmental dimension were integrated into production processes. In addition, jobs created in the

renewable energy and green industry sectors could help address unemployment and underemployment.

47. **Mr. Siikamäki** (Chief Economist, International Union for Conservation of Nature), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that over the previous few decades, economic growth had lifted millions out of poverty and improved the quality of life more generally. However, the benefits of development were not shared equitably and economic growth often occurred at the expense of biodiversity and ecosystem preservation. The world was facing a sixth mass extinction event, caused, unlike the previous five, by one of the species on Earth: humans.

48. Currently, a significant proportion of most taxonomic classes was at risk of extinction; in the most threatened class, amphibians, one third were at risk. Given that the timescales involved in extinctions were geological in nature, it was abnormal for so many changes to be witnessed during a human lifetime. Extinctions were being caused by urban development, climate change, pollution, agricultural expansion and the overexploitation of certain species. Many countries had begun to mitigate those threats and protect key biodiversity areas, including terrestrial and fresh water systems. However, many unprotected regions were still at risk.

49. Climate change was the greatest challenge facing humanity and nature, as it placed enormous pressure on species and ecosystems more broadly. While such pressure was a matter of concern, nature offered various means of mitigating climate change; for example, forests and wetlands stored carbon emissions. By better restoring, conserving and managing nature, the international community could reduce emissions and sequester carbon from the air. Recent publications indicated that there were at least 20 different avenues to mitigate climate change by harnessing nature, and that nature's mitigation potential was much greater than previously thought. Natural climate solutions could potentially provide 37 per cent of the cost-effective carbon dioxide mitigation measures needed to keep global warming below the 2-degree threshold by 2030. It was also more cost-effective to mitigate climate change by harnessing nature, than by tapping into other economic sectors such as transport or energy.

50. Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15 were the Goals most directly related to environmental concerns; however, the preservation of nature was also recognized in specific targets related to food security and responsible production and consumption. Nature-based solutions were at the heart of sustainability: it was essential to promote nature management to address hunger, labour, food security and many other broader objectives. Greater investment would be needed to address the significant funding gap that remained. It was estimated that between $250 billion and $350 billion per year was needed for nature conservation. The public sector, which had traditionally been the source of such investments, could not provide all of that amount, some of which would need to be provided through blended finance solutions and innovative means of private financing. Economic growth should not be pursued at the expense of nature but combined with the preservation of nature, and nature-based solutions should be exploited to improve economic well-being globally.

51. The most powerful argument that could be made to emphasize the impact of species extinction and biodiversity loss on the economy was that, with each species lost, a unique piece of information disappeared forever. More broadly, however, ecosystem degradation entailed the loss of various natural services on which humans depended, including water and air quality control. The natural services provided by ecosystems were economically significant, though it was difficult to estimate their financial value directly, as they did not necessarily show up in corporate or national budgets. It was important to find ways to represent that loss in measures such as GDP and corporate profit.

52. **Ms. Tully** (Co-founder, School of International Futures), panellist, said that good sustainable development strategies must be developed to deal with the uncertainty that the world would face up to 2030. Foresight and the development of alternative scenarios were important in building resilience, as had been shown by the relative resilience of Singapore, which had used strategic foresight to inform policy-making, to the 1997 financial crisis. Unfortunately, the universal, long-term and participatory framework of the Sustainable Development Goals was not currently being matched by adequate strategic planning processes around the world. The 2030 strategies currently being developed did not look at the unintended risks or unforeseen opportunities that could emerge thanks to technology; they often remained linear and narrow. Secondly, humans were not changing their behaviour quickly enough to ensure the necessary transformations.

53. Policymakers must mainstream strategic foresight and develop alternative scenarios when they worked on sustainable development strategies. She welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in looking at frontier issues, promoting preventive scanning and bolstering the role of resident coordinators to bring communities together. Many countries, cities and international organizations

were beginning to realize the value of sectoral and global scenario planning. It was essential to prepare contingency plans for worst-case scenarios. In Africa, for instance, one country had been able to prevent an electoral crisis precisely because its military had prepared for such a scenario. It was important to develop agility and think about the future, instead of governing on the basis of the past.

54. Governments and communities must focus on promoting technologies, financing prevention measures and ensuring citizen participation, using foresight to think more critically about how new technologies could affect the world and how regulation could ensure representation and access for all. Scanning, foresight and the development of counterfactual models should be used to avoid future conflicts and famines. For example, investment should be made in health systems to prepare for the shift predicted in malaria distribution as a result of climate change. Data, indicators, monitoring and evaluation must be taken into account. Citizens should actively participate, including in budgeting. Member States should adopt strategic foresight measures at all levels of government, including ministries, the judiciary, legislature and audit committees. Anticipatory governance skills and institutions should be developed to better respond to emerging challenges, in part by ensuring that the participation of citizens, particularly young people, remained a key element. Member States must also support the United Nations system so that it could respond in a coherent fashion across the development, humanitarian and peace and security pillars. Crises presented short-term windows of opportunity that could be used to change people's minds and habits if a dialogue on the subject had already existed prior to the crisis.

55. **Mr. Gyan-Baffour** (Ghana) said that an enormous amount of resources would be needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and the private sector would not be able to provide the trillions of dollars needed. The United Nations should examine each Goal at the national level, determining the need for catalytic interventions on a case-by-case basis.

56. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) asked how the special and differential treatment granted to developing countries in WTO agreements could promote and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries.

57. **Mr. Teh** (Chief of Section, Economic Research and Statistics at the World Trade Organization (WTO)) said that the need for such treatment was recognized in Sustainable Development Goal target 10.A, while the proportion of duty-free tariff lines from least developed and developing countries was monitored through indicator 10.A.1. In the previous 10 years, there had been a large increase in the amount of duty-free tariff lines. In 2005, less than 50 per cent of tariff lines from developing countries had been duty-free, whereas by 2015 almost two-thirds were.

58. **Ms. Tobin** (Observer for WaterAid) said that, as a member of the non-governmental organizations major group, WaterAid felt it was essential to firmly situate the Sustainable Development Goals within a human rights framework in all contexts, including when receiving support from international financial institutions and United Nations agencies. The State must be reaffirmed as the duty-bearer of all human rights, and all guidance and finance must ensure that Governments had the necessary policy space to enact regulation, enforcement and fiscal measures to advance their democratically owned and rights-based development agendas.

59. The discussions at United Nations Headquarters did not reflect developments in the rest of the world, including bilateral summits; for instance, there was a huge discrepancy in many countries between the high levels of military spending and the minimal budget allocations reserved for sustainable development. The urgent need for universal social protection floors and for public financing to address poverty and rising inequality was not always matched by concrete commitments outside the United Nations.

60. The 2030 Agenda could be implemented only if the systemic and structural obstacles to the socioeconomic transformation of developing countries were addressed. She was concerned regarding the emphasis placed on blended finance and public-private partnerships by international financial institutions, as such measures redirected scarce public resources towards the private sector while leaving the public responsible for all risk. Private finance must complement rather than replace national and international public resources. IMF should not impose fiscal consolidation on countries, as austerity policies and regressive taxation seriously impeded their ability to finance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

61. Countries should enact financial transactions acts, and an intergovernmental tax cooperation body should be established at the United Nations level. The power to make economic, financial, monetary and trade-related decisions must be taken away from international financial institutions and entrusted to the United Nations, with a view to democratizing global economic governance. Trade must be organized through multilateral forums that ensured the rights-based

implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as sufficient policy space for national regulation. The high-level political forum on sustainable development and the Council did not have the power or scope to monitor the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. International financial institutions should support governance reform and work with Governments to implement the 2030 Agenda with a focus on human rights and dignity for all.

62. **Mr. Robinson** (Deputy Director, African Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF)) said that IMF programmes were developed in close collaboration with Governments and explicitly anchored in national policy frameworks. IMF always respected national priorities, calculated which interventions would have the most impact in those areas, and discussed options consistent with the resources available. While military spending was on the rise, the issue of most concern was increased spending on security and refugees in many low-income countries, which also struggled with development issues.

63. **Mr. Oumarou** (Deputy Director-General for Field Operations and Partnerships at the International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that a net increase of between 0.5 and 2 per cent in the number of jobs worldwide was predicted by 2030 if green initiatives were launched. A virtuous cycle could be created, with green jobs helping to preserve nature, just as a healthy natural environment could be harnessed to create decent working conditions. Climate change and other environmental issues were an ideal lens through which to examine the Sustainable Development Goals, including those related to the future of work. Environmentally friendly, inclusive jobs would help eradicate poverty and lack of job security. Structural economic transformations must be accompanied by decent working conditions, as envisioned in Sustainable Development Goal 8.

64. **Ms. Tully** (Co-founder, School of International Futures) said that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda seemed challenging unless one took a more optimistic view of technology and envisioned a future in which blockchain, artificial intelligence, synthetic biology and a hyper-digital economy played prominent roles. The scenarios developed by the OECD depicted a radically different world, with huge opportunities for health and food security. The international community should therefore adopt a more creative vision of the future, in which the opportunities presented by future technologies were harnessed but such concerns as the political consequences of geoengineering and pandemics were taken into consideration.

65. **Mr. Siikamäki** (Chief Economist, International Union for Conservation of Nature) said that many people who suffered from hunger and poverty depended directly on natural resources for their livelihoods, including 1.5 billion people who depended on forests alone. In terms of natural resource degradation, the poorest also tended to be affected the most, and the most rapidly. The unsustainable management of natural resources, whether as a result of insufficient technology and capital, governance issues or land tenure problems, should be addressed so that the lives of many could be improved in the short term. Although calls for private funding to manage natural resources had been made, public funding would also be needed to establish the necessary education, technology and governance structures. In the long term, perhaps such structures would become sustainable and attract private funding.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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President: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)
later: Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Vice-President) ..... (Belgium)

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18-12021 (E)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 9.15 a.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (E/2018/64)

General debate (continued)

1. **The President** invited the ministerial meeting to resume its general debate on the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies".

2. **Mr. Charles** (Jamaica), Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, said that the alignment between his country's national development plan, Vision 2030 Jamaica, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had produced a strong and consistent sense of national ownership and commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, allowing synergies to be utilized to create a common, systematic and integrated framework for the monitoring and implementation of national development policies and programmes. In terms of progress, Jamaica had achieved a relatively high human development ranking, improved its performance in key indicators of human capital formation and attained a measure of macroeconomic stability. Under its medium-term socioeconomic policy framework for 2018–2021, Jamaica would pursue several critical policies to foster sustainable development, including approaches for climate proofing its development and continued efforts to strengthen the sustainable management of its terrestrial and marine environments.

3. However, Jamaica continued to face challenges caused by vulnerabilities aggravated by the negative impact of climate change and high levels of debt, which limited the extent to which his Government could implement policies geared towards achieving fast and sustained socioeconomic progress. Although the Goals must ultimately be implemented at the national level, success would require partnerships to be forged that spanned the national, regional and multilateral levels and involved public, private and civil society sectors. Capacity-building was also central to his Government's efforts to implement well-designed cross-cutting strategies for achieving sustainable development. As the mobilization of scaled-up financing was essential for achieving the Goals, Jamaica had partnered with Canada to spearhead the establishment of the Group of Friends of Sustainable Development Goal Finance as a platform for direct engagement with the private sector.

4. **Mr. Barahona** (Honduras), Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, said that Tegucigalpa, which had the highest concentration of urban poverty in Honduras, served as an example of a Latin American city in transition to sustainability. The city's topography, unplanned growth and the absence of urban development policies had served as catalysts for the Tegucigalpa and Comayagüela Action Plan, the aim of which was to improve slums and ensure that all people had access to housing and basic, affordable services. Those policies, along with the city's priorities of sanitation and drainage, urban inequality, security, water, reduction of vulnerability to disasters, employment, land use and transport were in line with the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities.

5. With regard to Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation, the availability of water and sanitation services in Honduras had significantly improved over recent decades. However, his Government's principal aim was to continue improving water quality and availability, particularly in rural areas. It had taken a multidimensional and participatory approach to that challenge by holding interinstitutional and intersectoral workshops to ensure that the achievement of Goal 6 was a shared responsibility, and it had focused efforts on outreach to the private and municipal sectors in order to ensure that the Goal was taken into account in local and spatial planning and when establishing partnerships. Water and sanitation were among the 37 national priorities of the Government's strategic plan for 2018–2022. The national water plan and the water, forest and land master plan served to ensure the necessary long-term interinstitutional coordination in addressing those issues. His Government continued to work closely with the United Nations under its "Delivering as One" initiative to implement the Honduran 2030 National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals, based on three fundamental criteria: that the Goal in question was relevant for the country, that it was related to the planning system and that the country had the resources to achieve it.

6. **Ms. Schwarzelühr-Sutter** (Germany), Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, said that despite the progress already made, the international community was not on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The high-level political forum on sustainable development to be held under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2019 would

accelerate the political momentum and provide high-level political guidance for further implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which, together with the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other international agreements, provided a vehicle for multilateral cooperation and action. The transition to sustainable development models could act as a catalyst for the modernization of the economy, with positive impacts for competitiveness, the job market, social inclusion, participation and political stability. At the same time, such a transition heralded major change for many economic sectors.

7. Her Government had developed the German Sustainable Development Strategy to serve as its framework for achieving the Goals. It was regularly updating that Strategy, which was aligned with the 2030 Agenda, and continued to conduct consultations with stakeholders. Her Government was also increasingly taking the global impact of its domestic actions into account. The inclusive and participatory nature of the 2030 Agenda, along with a human-rights based approach addressing vulnerable and marginalized groups, should underpin all endeavours to ensure that no one was left behind. Efforts to shape globalization in a sustainable manner that respected the environment, focused on human well-being and invested in the future must be redoubled.

8. **Ms. El Ouafi** (Morocco), Secretary of State to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Sustainable Development, said that her Government had engaged in collective mobilization efforts at the national and international levels, drawing inspiration from the 2030 Agenda. The 2011 Constitution stated that sustainable development was a right for all citizens and her Government had adopted a national strategy, following broad consultation, to achieve sustainable development by 2030. That strategy was based on several priorities, which included strengthening sustainable development management, successfully moving towards a green economy, improving the management and value of natural resources, supporting the preservation of biological diversity, accelerating the implementation of national policies to mitigate climate change, reducing social inequality and promoting a culture of sustainable development.

9. To accelerate implementation of the national strategy, her Government had developed 21 sectoral plans for sustainable development, and a plan specific to their implementation in the field of sustainable development. It had also put in place a governance framework consisting of two high-level committees mandated to closely track progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Several programmes had been implemented to apply the national strategy, including in the areas of water purification, domestic waste management, waste conversion, air quality and climate.

10. Her Government was working to ensure that national efforts were in line with the Goals. For example, it planned to decrease greenhouse gas emissions by 42 per cent and to increase the percentage of renewable sources in its energy mix to 52 per cent by 2030. In addition, her Government had recently begun construction of the Nur Ouarzazate 4 solar power plant, which would be the largest in the world upon completion.

11. Alongside its efforts to achieve sustainable development, Morocco had also focused heavily on mobilizing women and youth. Convinced that equality and equal opportunity for both sexes was a basic human right, it was a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The desire for equality was also reflected in the 2011 Constitution and in the efforts to mainstream gender in various governmental strategies, plans and programmes.

12. **Mr. Hadas** (Israel), Special Envoy for Sustainability and Climate Change, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reaffirming his Government's commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, said that Israel was well known for innovation in various fields. Such innovation, together with the right policy framework, could provide comprehensive solutions to the issues at hand. Israel had shown its ability to successfully implement technological innovations, including in the area of water management. Once a limiting factor for economic development, water was now an abundant resource in Israel. In that regard, desalination had been a key tool, but other factors needed to be addressed for Israel to achieve Goal 6. Another challenge that Israel currently faced was that of increasing its renewable energy sources. Although access to energy was high, Israel had limited land resources and a fast-growing urban population, as a result of which the land available for renewable energy production was scarce and hotly contested.

13. Israel had shown its willingness to share its experience and expertise through international cooperation, including on water management. Having solved its water problems through desalination and water recycling, Israel could easily share that knowledge with neighbouring countries and around the world. The Israeli Cabinet had recently decided to accelerate investment in the developing world and would encourage the involvement of the Israeli private

sector in development activities in partner countries. Through pursuing such international partnerships and fostering global solidarity, the Sustainable Development Goals could be achieved.

14. **Mr. Maiga** (Mali), Permanent Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that different technical departments, the National Assembly, regional governments, civil society, the private sector, persons with disabilities and other stakeholders had all been involved in preparing the voluntary national review that had been presented during the high-level political forum.

15. Given its financial and socioeconomic constraints, Mali faced massive challenges in effectively implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. Even so, the Malian authorities had always aided vulnerable populations and the Government was determined to stabilize regions beset by terrorist groups. The implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali emanating from the Algiers process, and the upcoming elections, were contributing to the harmonious development and stability of Mali.

16. Government-backed programmes and initiatives, with community participation, strengthened the fabric of society, reducing inequalities in the provision of basic social services and lowering the risk of food insecurity, thereby illustrating the efforts of Mali to ensure that no one was left behind. Significant progress had been made in a number of areas, including road infrastructure, through extensive paving projects in the interior of the country, and agriculture, to which 15 per cent of the national budget was allocated.

17. Several social housing programmes had been established for low-income households, while the "Jigisemejiri" Safety Nets Project, supported by the World Bank Group, provided cash transfers to poor households facing food insecurity. Over 60,000 households had benefited from such transfers by 30 September 2016 and it was hoped that that number would rise to over 91,000 by the end of 2019.

18. **Ms. Belskaya** (Belarus), Head of Directorate-General for Multilateral Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the high-level political forum was an important intergovernmental mechanism for exchanging information and discussing pressing issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals. The National Council for Sustainable Development provided a platform for intersectoral exchange in that regard. A great deal had already been achieved and the National Coordinator for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals had presented the voluntary national review of Belarus to the forum in 2017.

19. A parliamentary working group for the Sustainable Development Goals oversaw the creation of favourable conditions to achieve the Goals at the legislative level. Accordingly, sustainable principles had recently been introduced into legislation related to public-private partnerships, the drinking water supply, food safety and the production and handling of organic products. Furthermore, open parliamentary hearings had been held on the importance of partnerships between the different branches of Government for the achievement of the Goals, a special government meeting had recently been held on the Goals and the Cabinet had adopted key decisions on the integration of sustainable development indicators in both sectoral and regional economic, environmental and social programmes.

20. A national list of Sustainable Development Goal indicators would be approved in 2018 and a national platform would be operationalized to ensure data collection for the achievement of the Goals. Belarus intended to increase awareness about sustainability, particularly among children and young people, and regional events would be held to promote economic, social and environmental sustainability.

21. International expert assistance was a valuable compliment to national efforts. In that regard, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund had deployed a mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support strategy mission to Belarus in November 2017. Its recommendations had been incorporated into the national road map for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

22. A regional forum on the Goals held in Minsk in February 2018 had included more than 30 countries and had been attended by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe. Participants at the forum had supported the initiative of Belarus to establish a partnership network of national coordinators for the Goals. One of the main recommendations from the forum was the need for the United Nations to provide coordinated support to middle-income countries. In that context, her Government attached great importance to the increasing contribution of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to the industrial development of middle-income countries in such areas as clean energy production, energy efficiency and support for small and medium-sized enterprises. In September 2018 a UNIDO workshop would be held in Minsk to devise a support strategy for middle-income countries. That event should lead to the development of a long-term comprehensive strategy for the United Nations with respect to middle-income countries.

23. **Mr. Mupamhanga** (Zimbabwe), Deputy Chief Secretary to the Office of the President and Cabinet, said that his Government aimed to make Zimbabwe a middle-income country by 2030, mirroring the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. With continued support from the international community, the implementation of the country's development plan would usher in a new era of prosperity and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

24. Zimbabwe continued to strengthen existing programmes and combine them with new initiatives to build a sustainable and resilient society. For example, by reinforcing a scheme to provide farming inputs support, his Government had significantly increased the national strategic grain reserve and had made considerable progress towards food self-sufficiency. With regard to Goal 6, a national programme had been implemented to rehabilitate and repair non-functional water points. Solar-powered piped water schemes had also been launched to provide access to drinking water.

25. Access to improved sanitation remained a challenge both in rural and urban areas. Open defecation, which stood at 34 per cent nationally, had been eliminated in 3,800 villages during the review period.

26. Greater focus was being placed on increasing the availability of renewable energy to attain self-sufficiency and, ultimately, grow the economy. The rural electrification projects currently under way would also be positively affected. His Government was taking steps to increase electricity generation by setting up new hydroelectric power stations and by stepping up existing production.

27. To address the resource gap by attracting investment, his Government had initiated a number of reforms, including steps to improve the ease of doing business and the establishment of a one-stop investment centre. Measures had also been taken to repatriate illegally externalized resources; such efforts were supported by the anti-corruption drive under way and would benefit immensely from increased international collaboration.

28. **Mr. de Vaujany** (France), Director General for Global Affairs, Culture, Education and International Development, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, said that France had been one of the first 22 countries to present a voluntary national review at the high-level political forum and that it viewed the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement as two sides of the same coin. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the international community must undertake robust and effective multilateral efforts to respond to collective governance challenges. In that regard, the One Planet Summit, held in Paris on 12 December 2017, constituted a turning point in terms of the commitments made by Heads of State, development banks and business leaders to safeguard the future of the planet.

29. All countries should promote the conservation of global diversity. France had recently implemented new structural policies in that regard, including a plan to make the protection of biodiversity a national priority. It was hoped that the plan would also contribute towards the adoption of a new ambitious international framework for the protection of biodiversity.

30. A plan to irreversibly implement the Paris Agreement had been adopted by his Government in July 2017. More recently, it had adopted a road map for the circular economy and would shortly adopt a national policy to combat deforestation in order to accelerate the achievement of Goal 12 on responsible consumption. France was also committed to increasing official development assistance (ODA) levels to 0.55 per cent of its gross national income by 2022. A road map to implement the Sustainable Development Goals would be presented during the next voluntary national review cycle in July 2019.

31. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America), Adviser, Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations, said that business as usual was no longer an acceptable way to address the world's most pressing development challenges. Nations must collectively adjust their approaches to the changing development landscape. The United Nations system must also change in order to demonstrate its added value to sustainable development and to fully support the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

32. The expansion of technology in the developing world was altering the reality of what was now possible. Traditional ODA was increasingly being reinforced by private sector engagement, domestic resource mobilization, financial flows and enhanced commerce and investment, all of which promised to increase self-reliance in developing countries.

33. However, the most monumental change was perhaps the enhanced relationship between the private and public sectors. Public-private partnerships across the United States were empowering residents and were crucial to addressing many of the challenges facing its communities. Examples of such initiatives included the investment of private equity in the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households, support for the development of next generation technologies by small businesses and funding for early-stage research for development in such areas as health,

agriculture and energy. New technologies were being used to predict droughts and to manage land more sustainably so as to ensure food security and avoid potential conflicts. Those new approaches to development could be leveraged to expand access to safe drinking water, improve sanitation, combat illegal wildlife trafficking and conserve national wetlands and forests.

34. As part of its broader reform efforts the United Nations system must fully recognize and embrace those changes, including by leveraging domestic resources and private flows, encouraging inputs from the private sector, adapting and streamlining its internal operational approaches and management, and reflecting on the most effective and efficient ways to generate positive change and development progress. Reform of the United Nations system must be inclusive and welcome views, inputs and leadership from all stakeholders. To best serve those most in need, United Nations agencies should move away from low-priority activities and instead focus on their core mandates and comparative advantages.

35. **Mr. La Camera** (Italy), Director-General, Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, said that a universal and integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was only possible with innovative, cross-sectoral and multidimensional governance based on the principles of policy coordination and cohesion, inclusiveness and accountability. His Government was working to implement the national strategy for sustainable development, which had been adopted in 2017. A consultative forum had been established to share values, methods and practices with local governments, with a view to supporting the development of local implementation strategies. An intergovernmental technical committee had been created to develop indicators, with the help of the national statistical system, and a permanent civil society forum would be launched in 2018. Given that the financial sector would play a crucial role in the transition to sustainable development, Italy supported the efforts of the Secretary-General to develop a United Nations strategy for sustainable finance.

36. Priority must also be given to combating climate change. Italy was on track to achieve the 2020 targets under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and stressed the urgent need to adopt the Paris Agreement rule book at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. Furthermore, the Government had mainstreamed climate in international development cooperation, prioritizing areas most impacted by climate change, including small islands in the Pacific, the Caribbean, Africa and the Indian Ocean, as well as countries on the African continent. In partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Italy had created a centre to focus on climate and sustainable development in Africa, in line with the recommendations made under its presidency of the Group of Seven in 2017, with the aim of meeting the financing demands of beneficiary countries. In addition, the Government supported the mandate of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General for the Sahel and the prefeasibility study of the Transaqua Project to replenish Lake Chad.

37. Italy had presented its voluntary national review in 2017 and would continue to share its challenges, efforts and achievements during the high-level political forum, which provided an opportunity to strengthen political momentum, share experiences and embrace further action from all actors in a collective effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

38. *Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

39. **Mr. Beladhane** (Algeria), Ambassador and Chair of the inter-sectional organ of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the development policy of Algeria prioritized building a stable, prosperous, developed and resilient society. His country had a universal social security system based on the principles of solidarity and fair distribution, had achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals and had nearly eradicated extreme poverty. In 2016, his Government had adopted a new economic growth model that aimed to diversify and transform the economy by reviving and consolidating economic growth, focusing on employment, decent housing, health and education. The growth model also prioritized water and environmental resources. Under the Constitution, the right to water was recognized as a fundamental human right. Significant investments had been made to improve the water sector, including the construction of 76 dams, 13 desalination units and 176 water treatment plants. As a result, 98 per cent of the population had access to drinking water and 95 per cent had access to the waste management system.

40. A sustainable urban development strategy had also been implemented. The Government had adapted the relevant legal framework, urban policy and requirements concerning the environment and renewable energy in order to improve living conditions in urban areas. At the same time, the Government was focusing on rural development to improve the quality of life in rural areas. Since 2000, 3.6 million housing units

had been built, and relocation and rehabilitation schemes had gradually eradicated precarious housing situations. Cities should integrate adaptation and resilience measures into future strategies to manage risks and natural disasters. With regard to green energy, his Government was launching a project to develop renewable energy and promote energy efficiency.

41. Each country was primarily responsible for its own economic and social progress. Nevertheless, in strengthening their national development efforts, States must be able to rely on an international economic environment that was favourable to development and provided adequate financial means. It was therefore necessary to give effect to the international partnership called for in the 2030 Agenda, which should be balanced, support developing countries and combat illicit financial flows. When States complied with their commitments to provide humanitarian assistance, they played an important role in eradicating poverty, strengthening the capacities of the poorest countries and reducing infrastructure deficits. Algeria would continue to provide such assistance through South-South and triangular cooperation.

42. **Ms. Đurišić** (Montenegro), Permanent Representative of Montenegro to the United Nations, said that the lack of sustainable development and peace in some areas threatened the entire world, as demonstrated by the refugee and migration crises, terrorism and violent extremism. The international community must therefore urgently intensify efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

43. Sustainable development was enshrined in the Constitution, and her Government had adapted the priorities of the 2030 Agenda to its corresponding national strategy and had presented its voluntary national review in 2016. In partnership with the United Nations country team, the Government had begun to explore the interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and the European Union accession process; 65 per cent of the Goal targets had a strong link to the negotiating chapters. The Government would work with development partners to meet the remaining targets and had employed the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support strategy to identify areas where the implementation of the 2030 Agenda could be stepped up. It had invited representatives of European Union negotiating teams from neighbouring countries to share their expertise and experience. Montenegro was strongly in favour of sharing best practices, developing research capacity and transferring technology and expertise.

44. Much work remained to be done to ensure that no one was left behind. Governments, the private sector and civil society must work together, as consolidated strategic partnerships were vital to ensuring that all countries were able to achieve the Goals.

45. **Mr. Locsin**, Jr. (Philippines), Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations, said that the final agreed text of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was a major step forward in ensuring that migrants were not left behind. The Compact recognized that human rights and sustainable development were not mutually exclusive and protected and promoted the rights and welfare of migrants, regardless of migration status. Henceforth no one could hide behind political rhetoric to avoid their responsibility to treat everyone with decency, which simply required the willingness to do so.

46. The Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved at the cost of nature: the Earth must also be protected. The Philippines was located in the Pacific Ring of Fire and in the path of increasingly intense typhoons. As a result, disaster risk reduction was entrenched in national programmes. His Government therefore welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 2018/14, entitled "Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters".

47. Timely, comprehensive and disaggregated data must be urgently developed to better understand the situation of all citizens, particularly the poorest and most marginalized, with a view to developing policies and programmes that were tailored to their needs and enhanced their capacities. His Government was committed to improving the quality and quantity of disaggregated data to monitor progress towards the Goals and supported the recent Inclusive Data Charter.

48. **Ms. Hasanova** (Azerbaijan), Deputy Minister of Economy, said that her country attached great importance to global partnerships. With support from the United Nations and other international development partners, her Government had achieved significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, eliminating extreme poverty, reducing absolute poverty and unemployment and increasing gross domestic product and income. Azerbaijan had presented its voluntary national review in 2017, which had helped to intensify national efforts to promote sustainability as a driver of prosperity and development.

49. In order to implement the 2030 Agenda, there must be ownership and a high-level commitment. In that connection, a national coordination council on sustainable development had been established under the

leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister and had taken significant steps towards adapting the Sustainable Development Goals to the national context. However, government commitments must be complemented by wide public participation. In partnership with the United Nations country office, her Government had developed an advocacy campaign strategy and had organized events with stakeholders, including members of parliament, civil society, children, youth, women and the private sector. Given that global partnership and information sharing were essential to achieving the Goals, Azerbaijan would host an international high-level forum on sustainable development in Baku in 2018, bringing together national representatives, United Nations officials, academia and international experts to discuss challenges and share best practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. She invited all participants to attend the forum and share their development experiences.

50. **Mr. Rudiyanto** (Indonesia), Deputy Minister for Maritime and Natural Resources, National Development Planning Agency, said that a presidential decree on the Sustainable Development Goals had been issued in 2017, and over 230 civil society organizations had participated in developing the national action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, launched in June 2018. The plan had become an integrated planning document that incorporated both government and non-governmental programmes. Monitoring and evaluation would be a collaborative effort, with civil society organizations conducting independent evaluations. However, the national annual accountability report would be a consolidated document.

51. The growing number of countries participating in the voluntary national reviews was proof that the high-level political forum could fulfil its role as the global follow-up and review mechanism for the Goals. Through that process, it must be possible to identify implementation gaps and trigger effective actions. The United Nations system should be proactive in seeking solution-oriented actions to address those gaps and provide the necessary assistance to developing countries in accordance with their needs and priorities. Attaining the Goals and targets would require strong political commitment, robust actions, effective global partnership and genuine multi-stakeholder cooperation.

52. **Mr. Marcondes de Carvalho** (Brazil), Undersecretary General for the Environment, Energy, Science and Technology of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the high-level political forum had provided participants with an opportunity to listen, share experiences and exchange best practices. Brazil had presented its first voluntary national review in 2017. The National Commission for the Sustainable Development Goals had equal representation from government and non-governmental agencies and served as the main governance mechanism for fostering dialogue, promoting engagement and integrating initiatives carried out by civil society, the private sector and government at all levels. The biannual action plan, which outlined objectives, expected results, deadlines and responsibilities, allowed for greater transparency and accountability. An open-ended, multi-stakeholder working group on partnerships and implementation had been created, and two additional working groups would be established to examine the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and ensure coherence between the Goals and public policies. The National Commission was also focused on fostering communication and engagement and had created the Sustainable Development Goals Brazil Award to help establish a database of good practices.

53. The international community must endeavour to create an international environment conducive to promoting development. His Government valued multilateralism, promoted ownership of the 2030 Agenda, encouraged the engagement of all stakeholders and endeavoured to ensure that national ambitions were matched by decisive action.

54. **Mr. Mousavi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), Director-General for International Environmental and Sustainable Development Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that, despite the scarcity of water, 99 per cent of the urban population and 93 per cent of the rural population had access to safe drinking water, and 100 per cent of the population had access to sanitation services. With regard to sustainable and modern energy, national energy policies focused on increasing capacity, using gas-powered and combined-cycle power plants, utilizing renewable energy, improving network resilience and respecting environmental concerns and climate commitments. In addition, his Government had implemented a comprehensive national master plan on productivity.

55. In connection to Sustainable Development Goal 15 on biodiversity, chronic drought and unsustainable land and water management had caused sand and dust storms to become more frequent and severe, affecting all aspects of life in most of western Iran. Urgent action was required at the local, regional and international levels. The General Assembly had adopted three resolutions to draw attention to the issue, and a high-level interactive dialogue on sand and dust storms had been convened in July 2018 to address that challenge in a more concerted manner.

56. With regard to Goal 17 on partnership, success was being hindered by the recent increase in attempts to undermine essential multilateral instruments, including the Paris Agreement. Furthermore, broadly exercised unilateralism threatened to reverse much of the development progress made in recent decades. Despite those constraints, Iran was prepared to scale up efforts to build a more prosperous and sustainable future for its people and contribute to achieving a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and ecological imbalance.

57. **Mr. Muia** (Kenya), Principal Secretary at the Ministry of National Treasury and Planning, said that universal access to clean and renewable energy continued to be a national priority. Generating capacity had increased by 32 per cent, from 2013 to 2017, and was expected to double by 2022. Over three quarters of the country's energy came from renewable sources. Kenya had completed one of the largest wind power projects in Africa and was the leading producer of geothermal energy on the continent, ranked eighth in the world. His Government also promoted the use of energy-efficient cookstoves and lightbulbs. To improve access in rural areas, it had adopted innovative interventions, including pay-as-you-go systems, off-grid options and microcredit supported by mobile money services. Nevertheless, affordability remained a challenge.

58. The provision of housing for all was anchored in the Constitution and was one of the four key development priorities for the period from 2018 to 2022, along with universal health care, food and nutrition security and industrialization. His Government had committed to providing 400,000 affordable houses and 100,000 social housing units in the next five years, in partnership with subnational governments, the private sector, cooperatives and the financial sector. In addition, a programme had been established to upgrade slums and improve the livelihoods of slum dwellers. The Government had also developed a national spatial plan for 2015–2045, a land-use policy to guide sustainable urban development and was conducting research on appropriate building materials and technologies to lower the cost of housing.

59. The Government had developed frameworks to implement its green economic strategy, had banned plastics and disposed of waste in landfills. It sought to achieve 10 per cent forest cover by 2022, had intensified efforts to rehabilitate and protect the five major water towers and supported the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management. However, more international cooperation was needed to boost water efficiency and treatment technologies.

60. **Mr. Mansour** (Observer for the State of Palestine), Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, said that the State of Palestine had submitted its voluntary national review and had complied with all relevant guidelines and instructions, which was a credit to its people living under occupation. The State of Palestine faced mounting challenges in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The continued Israeli occupation and the systematic, widespread abuses and breaches of international law greatly impeded the ability to fulfil obligations under international instruments, particularly with respect to the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, cuts in contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East threatened the very existence of that agency and undermined operations to provide services to Palestinian refugees, who risked further poverty, unemployment, social marginalization and exclusion as a result.

61. Despite those challenges, his Government would continue to focus on implementing the 2030 Agenda through the national policy agenda for 2017–2022, which had incorporated a number of targets and indicators. However, the ability of the Government to meet those targets was impeded by the national economic and financial situation, the inability to access and exploit natural resources and the steep decline in ODA. Furthermore, the Government could not fulfil its pledge to leave no one behind without enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination, ending the long-term Israeli military occupation and establishing a fully independent and sovereign State within the territory with East Jerusalem as its capital. The international community must fulfil its duties and responsibilities in that connection.

62. **Ms. Bird** (Australia), Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations, said that her Government had published a white paper on foreign policy in 2017, which would guide its international engagement over the next decade. The 2030 Agenda was central to national efforts to promote sustainable development and reflected issues that Australians highly valued, including a clean and safe environment, gender equality, inclusive economies and respect for indigenous cultures and heritage. As a member of the Human Rights Council, Australia was committed to promoting the rights of all people, including women and girls, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, and to ensuring that no one was left behind.

63. Australia had presented its voluntary national review, which reflected the collective efforts of governments, businesses, civil society, youth and other stakeholders. It highlighted achievements that included

the stewardship of the Great Barrier Reef, improvements to the liveability of cities and support for persons with disabilities through the national disability insurance scheme. The review had also outlined national contributions to building stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. Her Government was committed to delivering effective development assistance at record levels in the Pacific region and to working closely with partners to strengthen economic resilience and improve health, education, action on climate change and disasters, governance and gender equality.

64. Financing from all sources was required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The review had highlighted the contributions of the public and private sectors in Australia and the ways in which its overseas aid was leveraging new resources and promoting aid for trade in order to drive inclusive growth and reduce poverty. Australia was also helping to reduce remittance costs and supporting domestic resource mobilization, including through its membership in the Addis Tax Initiative.

65. **Mr. Hawke** (New Zealand), Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, said that the convergence of economic, social and environmental issues meant that States must innovate and form new partnerships across borders. His Government was committed to a transformative sustainable development agenda that directly reflected the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, it had introduced legislation to reduce child poverty to 5 per cent in 10 years, had introduced a families package and had increased the minimum wage in order to boost the incomes of low- and middle-income families. The Government had also opened consultations on legislation to commit to zero carbon emissions by 2050. Consultations were also being held on a trade agenda, which would ensure that trade policy benefited all citizens and contributed to addressing global and regional issues. In addition, the Government was re-evaluating its contributions to the sustainable development of Pacific countries, which included a substantial increase in its aid budget.

66. Two systemic tools for sustainable development were also being developed. The living standards framework would allow the Government to evaluate the impact of policy and resource decisions on current and future overall well-being, moving beyond economic measures to consider the health and sustainability of natural, human, social, financial and physical capital. The framework would inform the first national well-being budget, to be created in 2019. The second tool was a statistical framework of indicators that would track the well-being of New Zealanders across economic, social, environmental and transboundary dimensions and would provide the data for the first voluntary national report, to be presented in 2019.

67. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations, said that leaving no one behind required more immediate and concerted efforts from all stakeholders at every level to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that connection, Sustainable Development Goal 17 was of particular importance and the mobilization of resources was also critical. Given that least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States continued to face unique challenges and difficulties, they would not have adequate resources to implement the 2030 Agenda. All relevant stakeholders, including development partners, United Nations agencies, the private sector and civil society must work together to support those countries in achieving the Goals, as reflected in national development plans.

68. His delegation supported the reform of the United Nations development system and expressed concern over the continued decline in ODA and core resources. He therefore called on development partners to provide adequate resources in a predictable and sustainable manner so that agencies could effectively carry out their mandates.

69. His Government had established a national steering committee to ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and had been working closely with the United Nations country team and other partners to incorporate the Goals into the national development plan. It had also adopted an additional goal on unexploded ordnances to improve the quality of life in rural areas. Approximately 60 per cent of the Goal indicators had been incorporated in the current plan, and the remaining indicators would be integrated in the future.

70. **Mr. Skoknic Tapia** (Chile), Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, said that Chile had presented its voluntary national review in July 2017, marking the first assessment of its performance in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. One year later, Chile had further advanced, as indicated in the SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2018 which ranked it among the leading countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and within the top 40 countries worldwide. Given their ambitious and transformative nature, it would be impossible to accomplish the Goals if the 2030 Agenda were not approached as a State

policy which transcended different Governments. Chile had taken important steps in that direction. In addition to the four areas of focus identified in the initial diagnostic report for 2016 and 2017, a fifth area included in 2018 involved reaching five national agreements on the issues of children, health, public safety, indigenous peoples and overcoming poverty.

71. Notwithstanding the integrated and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda, his Government had established a number of specific priorities for the coming year. For Goal 6, it was necessary to address desertification, the impact of irrigation projects, the granting of water rights and large investment projects. In that regard, several plans relating to water resources had been developed. For Goal 7, an energy road map for 2018–2022 had been developed to strengthen a shared vision of development focused on the achievement of strategic objectives. Under Goal 11, regional and local decontamination plans, consisting of tangible, local measures, had been devised. With respect to Goal 12, the country had taken a historic step forward with its approval of a bill which prohibited all stores nationwide from handing out plastic bags. For Goal 17, the five aforementioned national agreements reflected the concepts of unity, democracy and intersectionality and represented comprehensive policy proposals prepared through consultation with all sectors of society.

72. Goal 5 was a cross-cutting goal of paramount importance. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls would decisively contribute to the achievement of every Goal in the 2030 Agenda. Keeping in mind differences and complementarities, Chile hoped to continue working with Governments and other actors on international and regional review mechanisms to ensure that no one would be left behind.

73. **Mr. Korneliou** (Cyprus), Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations, said that his country had assigned coordination of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals to the Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development, thereby enhancing coherence in governance and results delivery, since that body was also responsible for the implementation of a reform programme based on the European Union's strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

74. With regard to Goal 6, Cyprus was guided by the integrated water resources management paradigm. Efforts to address water challenges included promoting non-conventional water use, such as wastewater reuse, which it aimed to increase significantly by 2027, and desalination. Cyprus had initiated collaboration at the regional level with Greece and Israel and strongly supported the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028. In relation to Goal 7, Cyprus aimed to achieve, by 2020, 13 per cent coverage of its energy needs from renewable energy sources and a major reduction in primary energy consumption through switching from oil to natural gas in electricity generation. With regard to Goal 11, despite good implementation of the related targets, the financial crisis had negatively affected life in historic urban hubs. Cyprus was working to improve citizen participation and mainstream human rights into urban development. At the international level, the country was committed to protecting cultural heritage. As for Goal 12, Cyprus continued to work on implementing its national action plan for the development of the green economy and increasing sustainability in tourism.

75. A major development in relation to Goal 3 was the creation of a national health insurance system which would promote universal health coverage by 2020. Cyprus continued to support target 10.7 on migration and was committed to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which would contribute to increased international cooperation on migration and help improve the lives of migrants worldwide.

76. **Mr. Rai** (Papua New Guinea), Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations, said that for his country the 2030 Agenda was underpinned by the National Vision 2050 road map, the Development Strategic Plan for 2010–2030 and the Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development.

77. Papua New Guinea prioritized Sustainable Development Goal 6 as a basic human right and a vital component for poverty alleviation and improved living standards. Water sanitation remained an ongoing challenge as a majority of the population primarily lived in rural areas. For Goal 7, the country had adopted the National Energy Policy 2016–2020, which served as a guide for affordable, competitive and reliable energy to meet national development needs at a low cost while protecting the environment. For Goal 11, Papua New Guinea had adopted a national urbanization policy in 2010 to address the management of rural urban migration. That policy required concerted efforts from all stakeholders and assistance from international partners. For Goal 15, reform of the Conservation and Environment Protection Authority would enable the country to improve on environmental and biodiversity loss issues. In relation to Goal 17, the critical importance of global partnerships could not be overstated, and institutional and human capacity-building remained pivotal.

78. In spite of the modest progress made by Papua New Guinea to attain the Sustainable Development Goals, there remained many challenges including limited resources, capacity-building, technical know-how, governance issues and financing for development.

79. **Ms. García Gutiérrez** (Costa Rica), Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations, said that the comprehensive, universal and transformative nature of the Sustainable Development Goals required adaptive and innovative management and public institutions to respond to their multidimensional challenges.

80. From production to consumption, Costa Rica was committed to promoting sustainable lifestyles. Her delegation therefore wished to highlight the outcomes of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the aim of which had been to move "towards a pollution-free planet", as a fundamental component of efforts to promote improvements in the public and private sectors and civil society.

81. Regarding access to clean energy, Costa Rica had proposed the ambitious task of abolishing the use of fossil fuels. It was thus exploring the avenues of institutional reform and political support as well as new electric and hydroelectric technologies. Building sustainable societies was still one of the greatest challenges for Costa Rica, owing to its rapid urbanization and its significant vulnerability to climatic elements which limited access to resilient infrastructure. Nevertheless, the country was attempting to transform mobility in urban centres, transitioning from a model based on vehicular traffic to one focused on people, resource efficiency and sound infrastructure.

82. As solving and preventing conflict surrounding hydro resources was key to building international peace, Costa Rica welcomed the results of the 2015 Global High-level Panel on Water and Peace. Access to water was vital to both human and State development. However, for Costa Rica, climate change posed grave challenges owing to droughts, contamination and limited resources to finance resilient public infrastructure. Regarding sustainable production and consumption, the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission was crucial in developing guidelines to establish sustainable norms and practices on food safety. Costa Rica would propose June 7 to the General Assembly as World Food Safety Day in order to raise awareness about the link between food safety and sustainable development.

83. Despite the progress that it had made, Costa Rica suffered from structural gaps. However, those could eventually be overcome by stable and long-term international cooperation and by improved financial access to sustainable development and the exchange of new technologies. The country remained willing to share its experiences and policies through cooperation mechanisms.

84. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania), Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations, said that it was evident that individual countries and regions were making progress in the implementation of some targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, there remained challenges, as confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General (E/2018/64).

85. His country's achievements included mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into its national development plan, the commitment to increase domestic resource mobilization and the development budget, and the holding of awareness workshops on the Sustainable Development Goals. In pursuing pragmatic policies to expedite sustainable development, his Government was making investments in industrialization and critical infrastructure, placing emphasis on breaking down silos to create horizontal policy coherence that respected gender parity and encouraged the involvement of all stakeholders, including academia, research institutions, civil society and the private sector.

86. Another major milestone was the development of a poverty monitoring and evaluation plan to track progress in poverty reduction. The Goal indicators had been made part of the local government monitoring database and hence facilitated the preparation of the Sustainable Development Goals baseline report. Other actions included the mapping of national plans and training on data gap assessment related to the Goals.

87. For countries to become resilient and sustainable, as per the theme of the forum, relevant policies, meaningful interventions and effective governance were vital in facing the multidimensional challenges ahead. The need to enhance cooperation in capacity-building was an important pillar of Goal 17. If the 2030 Agenda was going to be achieved in the remaining 12 years, cooperation between stakeholders would need to be strengthened.

88. **Mr. Duarte Lopes** (Portugal), Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations, said that his country had presented its first voluntary national review in 2017. More than simply a bureaucratic exercise, the review had provided an opportunity for policy analysis and strategic alignment in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. His Government recognized the inextricable link between eradicating poverty, combating climate change and integrating a

strong human rights dimension that addressed inequalities and focused on gender issues. The Paris Agreement and the conservation and sustainable use of oceans were also integral to the 2030 Agenda.

89. All countries must share responsibility for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. While the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development served as a guidance tool to finance sustainable development, mobilizing additional financial resources and moving beyond traditional forms of development financing remained key challenges. The international community must therefore pursue new forms of finance from all possible sources and in volumes that far exceeded ODA, which continued to play a vital role, especially in least developed countries. As it recovered from the financial crisis, Portugal had been increasing its ODA and was seeking new funding models. Lastly, Portugal strongly supported the General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning the United Nations development system, adopted in May 2018.

90. **Ms. Beshkova** (Bulgaria), Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the United Nations, said that, while many efforts had been made to implement the 2030 Agenda, the international community must do more with regard to climate change, conflicts, inequality, poverty, hunger, rapid urbanization and environmental degradation. Disaggregated data was paramount to formulating policies, tracking progress and tailoring solutions. The policies of her Government were therefore based on disaggregated data produced by the national statistical institute. The principle of leaving no one behind was of the utmost importance to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Bulgaria. A number of national policies took into account the needs of persons with disabilities and older persons, and the Government invested in and empowered children, youth and women.

91. With regard to Goal 11, her Government was taking important steps to improve energy efficiency in residential buildings, prioritizing renovations in economically disadvantaged areas and for vulnerable groups. Those projects were decentralized to empower local communities. Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment and Water was developing a national air quality programme, and new initiatives on waste management focused on addressing waste accumulation, improving the use of resources and transitioning to more sustainable production and consumption methods.

92. Regarding Goal 12, the Government had prioritized transitioning to a circular economy in order to promote the effective use of resources and reduce the environmental impact. Taxes on electric vehicles had been significantly reduced, and the national trust eco-fund provided grants for electric vehicles and projects to improve energy efficiency. Given that every citizen had a responsibility to participate in sustainable production and consumption, the Government had outlined a plan to include environmental topics in primary and secondary school programmes as part of the recent education reform. With respect to Goal 7, Bulgaria had exceeded the national target to achieve 16 per cent renewable energy.

93. **Mr. Akbaruddin** (India), Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, said that the active engagement of a wide array of actors across different States and the high level of enthusiasm and interest among participants at the high-level political forum was reflective of the positive and voluntary nature of constructive multilateral engagement for the collective good. India was pushing ahead on each of the Sustainable Development Goals under review with strong political commitments and action by local and federal government agencies, as well as other stakeholders. His Government had launched an ambitious sanitation programme to improve hygiene and eliminate open defecation by October 2019. Under that programme, which would directly benefit 550 million Indians, 72 million household toilets had already been installed. In October 2018, India would host the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention, which would provide an opportunity to share and learn from global experiences.

94. India was increasing the share of renewable energy in its energy mix, with an emphasis on solar and wind power, including off-grid sources. The Government planned to produce 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022 and was partnering with other States to launch the International Solar Alliance, a treaty-based multilateral organization with over 60 member countries. By 2030, there would be 600 million Indians living in urban areas. His Government was therefore undertaking the world's largest affordable housing programme, building as many as 11 million homes before 2019, under a new urban infrastructure that would be green and resilient. India was one of 17 megadiverse countries in the world, with 8 per cent of the world's biodiversity, and extensive conservation efforts were underway to protect that heritage.

95. With regard to global partnerships, India had pledged $150 million for development and was partnering with the United Nations Office for South-

South Cooperation to administer the fund. His Government looked forward to engaging constructively in global efforts to achieve the Goals.

96. **Ms. Rubiales de Chamorro** (Nicaragua), Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations, said that the most pressing challenge in implementing the 2030 Agenda was having the means to do so. The high-level political forum provided a good opportunity to reaffirm commitments with regard to ODA, technology transfer, capacity-building and funding, which were vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Developed countries must therefore be encouraged to follow through on those commitments. The eradication of poverty continued to be the greatest global challenge. Given the lack of progress for the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, the international community must continue to stress the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

97. Her Government had developed a successful model of unity, dialogue and consensus to reduce poverty and transform the country. Since 2007, absolute poverty had fallen from 48 per cent to 23 per cent, and extreme poverty had decreased from 17 per cent to 7.5 per cent. With regard to Goal 6, access to drinking water had increased from 43 per cent to 91 per cent, and the Government aimed to achieve 96 per cent by 2021. With regard to Goal 7, access to electricity had increased from 54 per cent to 94.7 per cent, and the share of renewable energy had increased from 25 per cent in 2007 to 56 per cent in 2015.

98. True and effective global partnership was essential for development. Any reform undertaken at the United Nations must seek to implement the 2030 Agenda and renew the commitments made in the various international conferences on sustainable development and financing. In addition, the international community must promote human development through social justice, peace, harmony and respect for territorial integrity and self-determination in order to ensure the survival of the human race and the rights of Mother Earth.

99. **Mr. Alemu** (Ethiopia), Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, said that the Sustainable Development Goals were a collective commitment, and the lack of sufficient progress should therefore be of collective concern. A sense of urgency was needed to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which would require stronger political commitment, global partnership and multi-stakeholder collaboration at the national, regional and international levels. His delegation regretted that the ministerial declaration of the high-level political forum had not been adopted by consensus.

100. His Government continued to implement the 2030 Agenda and had fully integrated the Goals into its five-year national development plan. As a result, pro-poor economic growth had continued, and 70 per cent of the population had access to water, with a view to achieving full coverage by 2025. The Government had also invested heavily in renewable energy sources, thereby increasing the availability of affordable and sustainable energy, and continued to implement the climate-resilient green economy strategy, with a view to achieving a zero-carbon economy by 2025.

101. More effective global partnership and cooperation would remain indispensable to achieving the Goals in developing countries like Ethiopia. The international community must therefore enhance its commitments to make the Goals a reality for all, particularly the most vulnerable States and communities.

102. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador), Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations, said that his country had presented its voluntary national review in 2017 and had made tangible progress in achieving a number of the Sustainable Development Goals, in line with its national capacities. With support from the United Nations, his Government had recently launched a tool to monitor progress on the Goals, as part of the national planning system. The next step towards gaining a better view of the progress achieved would be to incorporate information from local governments, the private sector, civil society and other sectors. Middle-income countries like El Salvador also required financing to implement the 2030 Agenda. In that connection, his Government had established a national strategy for development financing with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

103. With the establishment of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the international community had a historic opportunity to address related challenges, focusing on their intrinsic connection to the 2030 Agenda, which went beyond Goal 10.

104. With regard to the environment, El Salvador reiterated its commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The international community must strengthen the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and the United Nations Environment Assembly. El Salvador, and Central America as a whole, had been affected by recurring and increasingly intense hydrometeorological events, including El Niño, drought and flooding, which had caused humanitarian

emergencies. He therefore called on the participants of the forum to continue to give consideration to climate change.

105. Lastly, expressing concern about the increasing difficulty in achieving consensus on the ministerial declaration, his delegation called on Member States to maintain the constructive spirit and commitments made during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and work towards its implementation at all levels.

106. **Mr. Saikal** (Afghanistan), Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, said that his country had presented its voluntary national review in 2017. Since then, his Government had established a national executive committee on the Sustainable Development Goals, which provided an effective high-level coordination platform for direct and sustained engagement among government stakeholders, the private sector, academia, civil society organizations and international development partners. It also served as a platform for implementing the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020. Furthermore, coordination among stakeholders had significantly increased, and the Goals were steadily becoming a part of the national development discourse.

107. In Afghanistan, 45 per cent of the population was food insecure, and the latest drought had further compounded the situation. In response, the Government had launched a national food security and nutrition agenda in October 2017, had joined the global Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and had begun to collaborate with the South Asia Food and Nutrition Security Initiative.

108. Given the challenging security situation, the gains made in health, education and gender equality must be consolidated and sustained. The Government was fully committed to combating terrorism and violent extremism and bringing peace to its people. While its security forces tirelessly fought extremism, it kept open the possibility of dialogue and lasting peace.

109. Translating the Goals into national and local contexts and establishing measurable targets and indicators had proven challenging. It required new ways of working together, building partnerships and providing financing. Given the complexity of that task and its capacity constraints, Afghanistan depended on the assistance and cooperation of its international partners to successfully achieve the Goals.

110. **Mr. Alotaibi** (Kuwait), Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations, said that the various global challenges to development partnerships and innovative financing gave cause for concern. Poverty, widespread conflicts and human rights violations, compounded by environmental challenges stemming from desertification and climate change, hampered sustainable development and threatened international peace and security. The international community must urgently adopt a common position to address those challenges.

111. From the outset, international development cooperation had been a strategic priority for his Government, which would continue to devote all efforts and resources to addressing global challenges, helping other countries, especially those in special circumstances, and promoting international cooperation between various partners. Developed countries, for their part, should play a key role in ODA and capacity-building to meet the needs and aspirations of developing countries, in accordance with the commitments made during the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

112. In order to preserve its national heritage, the Government had established an environmental programme to appropriately manage natural resources and use them in a balanced manner, with a view to protecting human and natural life. It had also adopted a number of evidenced-based strategies and laws to address the negative impacts of climate change.

113. With regard to implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Government had established a road map through 2032 and was formulating national development policies with the participation of stakeholders from all aspects of society. The 2030 Agenda could be implemented with the necessary political will, a belief in the importance of collaboration, and respect for decisions and commitments made. The United Nations could play a supervisory role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

114. **Mr. Ibragimov** (Uzbekistan), Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations, said that the United Nations country team in Uzbekistan had partnered with his Government to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure a robust framework for adapting the targets to the national development plan. The Government had also implemented far-reaching reforms to further improve the well-being of its people and achieve the Goals, with a focus on the priority areas of the national development strategy for 2017–2021.

115. Since implementing measures in 2017, the Government had seen sustained economic growth of 5.5 per cent. In order to fuel growth, 12 free economic zones and 45 industrial zones had been established. An additional 50 industrial zones were being planned, and 161 major industrial facilities had been commissioned.

Job creation also remained a priority. In 2017, 336,000 new jobs had been created as a result of new industrial enterprises, the development of small business and private enterprises and the expansion of the service industry.

116. The Government was building affordable housing and offering subsidized mortgages. The construction of standardized multistorey housing units in urban areas had added over 3.5 million square metres of living space. Measures had also been taken to mitigate the environmental situation in the Aral Sea region, and the Minister of Finance had established a development fund to improve the water supply and living conditions in the area.

117. In an attempt to achieve deeper reform, 2018 had been designated the year of support for active entrepreneurship, innovative ideas and technologies. The initiative aimed to facilitate the integration of technology and scientific advancements in production processes. A Ministry of Innovative Development had also been established.

118. **Mr. Ke** (Cambodia), Permanent Representative-Designate of Cambodia to the United Nations, said that, given the scope and ambition of the 2030 Agenda, 2018 was an appropriate time to examine trends and evaluate progress. The Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals framework was comprised of 18 goals; the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and one additional goal to rid Cambodia of landmines and the remnants of war. The framework would be adopted to coincide with the new cycle of the national development plan for 2018–2023, providing a single, development-tracking mechanism.

119. Regarding Goal 6, while the baseline position on access to water was sound, progress was needed on the quality of water, wastewater treatment and sanitation. Furthermore, with respect to Goal 7, while Cambodia had a strong starting point on the coverage and supply of energy it faced challenges in greening the energy mix and sourcing clean fuels. As for Goal 11, the emerging phenomenon of urbanization presented major issues in the medium-term, particularly preventing flooding, ensuring effective waste management and delivering clean water and sewage treatment.

120. With regard to Goal 12, despite serious challenges such as greening production in industry and agriculture and improving consumption practices, the position on recycling presented a solid basis for rapid progress. Furthermore, while Cambodia had a strong base to meet targets related to biodiversity, natural water resources and forest cover under Goal 15, maintaining and rebuilding those natural habitats was a considerable burden which would be tackled through policy-based targets, spending and regulatory measures. There was also a strong foundation for the adoption of new technologies and integration within global trade networks under Goal 17.

121. Two decades of solid economic growth had helped Cambodia reduce poverty from 53.2 per cent in 2004 to 13.5 per cent in 2014. The country had received a United Nations award for halving hunger before the deadline set by the Millennium Development Goals. It aimed to move from a lower-middle-income to a higher-middle-income economy by 2030.

122. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh), Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, said that his Government had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development plans and was coordinating implementation efforts at the highest political level, which demonstrated the extent of its political commitment.

123. Bangladesh had successfully completed a mapping exercise for the achievement of the Goals and targets and had also prepared a relevant national action plan. The Sustainable Development Goals Tracker had been developed as a data repository for monitoring implementation and facilitating the evaluation of progress through visualization schemes. The aim was to create a knowledge-based society through the use of information and communications technology.

124. One of the greatest challenges was mobilizing resources, with the annual implementation costs associated with the Goals in Bangladesh estimated at $66.32 billion. As there was also a considerable data gap for monitoring the Goals, a renewed focus had been placed on building the capacity of the national statistics office.

125. Further challenges included tackling inequality and creating decent jobs. Bangladesh would need to reform the educational and skill development sectors to maximize the job opportunities presented by new technologies and share the benefits of technological change.

126. The frequent and severe impacts of climate change continued to strain the agricultural sector and food security. It would be challenging to double agricultural productivity by 2030 as stipulated by target 2.3.

127. While Bangladesh had recently qualified for graduation from the category of a least developed country and had pledged to achieve middle-income country status by 2021, he urged development and trading partners to continue to provide their support.

128. **Ms. Yalçın** (Turkey), Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations, said that her Government's national development model was human-centred and focused on economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. Important achievements had been made regarding poverty eradication, job creation, improved income distribution, social protection and access to basic services and rights. Efforts for the empowerment of women had focused on removing economic and social barriers. The national development process also paid special attention to children, youth, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

129. Turkey had made significant steps towards reaching Sustainable Development Goal 6; access to water was almost at 100 per cent and water efficiency was being promoted across all sectors, including agriculture. Modern irrigation technologies and crops with low water consumption were being subsidized. In the context of Goal 7, as access to electricity was already at 100 per cent the focus had turned to increasing the ratio of renewables while enhancing efficiency and supply security. With regard to Goal 11, Turkey supported home ownership through affordable credits and developed urban transformation projects to regenerate weak structures and build safe settlements to reduce disaster risk. Under Goal 15, land degradation neutrality and soil organic carbon monitoring projects had been initiated. To protect the rich biodiversity, there was a focus on protecting and promoting species with significance for agriculture, forests, food and pharmaceuticals. A strengthened global partnership, as set out in Goal 17, was the key to achieving the other Goals through mobilizing the means of implementation.

130. In 2017, ODA in Turkey had risen to almost $8.2 billion, a 40.4 per cent increase over 2016. Indeed, the ratio of ODA a share of gross national income had increased sufficiently to meet the relevant targets under the Goals and the share allocated to humanitarian assistance made Turkey the largest donor in that category.

131. **Mr. Ma** Zhaoxu (China), Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, said that, although steady progress had been made worldwide since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, countries still had much to do to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on schedule. The international community should therefore remain committed to ensuring equitable, open, comprehensive and innovative development and should focus on helping developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda. To that end, it was particularly important to improve global economic governance, to increase the voice and representation of developing countries and to pursue open development that benefited all. Efforts should be made to achieved coordinated economic, social and environmental development, and reform and innovation should be used to stimulate development, drive economic growth and foster new core competitiveness. His country opposed unilateralism and trade protectionism, which threatened economic growth, and was willing to work with all parties to safeguard free trade and the multilateral trading system.

132. Since opening up to the world economy, China had made significant contributions to global economic growth. Over the past five years, trade under the Belt and Road Initiative had exceeded 5 trillion dollars and accumulative investments had totalled more than 70 billion dollars, creating more than 200,000 jobs for local communities. Over the next 15 years, China was expected to import goods worth 24 trillion dollars and its foreign investments would reach 2 trillion dollars. China would uphold its philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development with a focus on tackling unequal and inadequate development.

133. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives), Permanent Representative of Maldives to the United Nations, said that quality, up-to-date and disaggregated data were important to not only better understand the progress that had been made to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, but also the challenges countries faced in their implementation. Strengthening the capacity of national institutions must be addressed to gather, manage and analyse data, especially for countries carrying out voluntary national reviews.

134. The theme of the high-level political forum was particularly relevant to small island States as it highlighted his country's vulnerabilities to climate change, natural disasters and external economic shocks. His Government had implemented numerous policies to transform vulnerability into resilience and to build capacity for long-term gains, achieving varying results. The voluntary national review process was very useful for his country in identifying the challenges, best practices and gaps in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The need for a more integrated approach to enhance policy coordination was recognized, including an integrated data system to improve information sharing across sectors and improved reporting and data analysis.

135. **Ms. Davies** (United Kingdom), Chief Medical Officer for England and Chief Medical Advisor to the Government, said that her country remained firmly committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals domestically and would continue to

provide support and strong leadership internationally to ensure that no one was left behind. For example, as persons with disabilities were known to have fewer opportunities and worse outcomes than persons without disabilities, the Global Disability Summit to be held shortly in London would highlight that largely neglected issue in the area of development and humanitarian aid and would call for much greater action and investment from global actors. Her Government's commitment to the Inclusive Data Charter also aimed to ensure that every person counted and would have a fair opportunity in life.

136. Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies included tackling environmental problems. Committed to meeting its climate ambitions, including under the Paris Agreement, the Government had recently announced a new funding package to boost global research and stop plastic waste from entering the oceans. It had also adopted the Commonwealth Blue Charter to support the sustainable development of oceans.

137. Looking ahead, her country intended to lead efforts to take global action on building resilience to climate change, collaborate to improve access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene, support the development of sustainable energy and fight illegal wildlife trade. It would also encourage all countries to push for an ambitious new strategic framework for biodiversity post-2020 in order to underpin the efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 15. Gender equality remained a key priority and, though progress had been made, global commitments on gender must be translated into to real change. To combat drug-resistant infections, her country would work to combat microbial resistance, which indirectly or directly put all the Goals at risk.

138. Governments alone could not deliver the Goals; partnership was essential, in particular with the private sector, to stimulate growth and help delivery.

139. **Mr. Adom** (Côte d'Ivoire), Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations, said that his Government had taken ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals through such measures as the implementation of a national multiparty consultative framework and the integration of the Goals in the 2016–2020 National Development Plan. However, the Government's aim of making Côte d'Ivoire an emerging country by 2020 depended on meeting a number of challenges, including with regard to access to drinking water, the use of renewable energies for environmental conservation, access to decent housing and the conservation of biodiversity. To that end, his Government had begun an ambitious water source diversification project to increase water production, reduce water shortages and autonomize the drinking water supply in the south of the country. A total of 142,182 subsidized drinking-water connections had been established between 2009 and 2017, and a further 450,000 such connections would be established over the next few years. Furthermore, the first large-scale photovoltaic power station would be established in Korhogo in the north of the country and his Government adopted a solar energy development strategy regarding to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Several other measures had been introduced, with the support of international bodies, to preserve and restore terrestrial ecosystems, manage forests sustainably and combat desertification.

140. **Mr. Mayong Onon** (Malaysia), Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations, said that his country remained committed to supporting and implementing the 2030 Agenda as it worked to become a high-income, developed country. The current five-year development plan for 2016–2020 mirrored the multidimensional nature of the Sustainable Development Goals and would serve as the overarching and guiding policy for sustainable development. Under the road map approved by the Malaysian Cabinet in September 2016, his Government had established a national Sustainable Development Goal Council and a National Steering Committee.

141. Under the multi-stakeholder, participatory government structure, national symposiums and forums were held to promote the participation of stakeholders in achieving the Goals. The Government had conducted studies on data readiness and gap analysis and had undertaken a mapping exercise to align the Goals with the national development plan, with the involvement of civil society organizations and the private sector. It was engaging with a number of stakeholders to increase awareness at the grass-roots level. Malaysia was willing to share its experiences with other developing countries and welcomed collaboration with international partners to ensure the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

142. **Mr. Al-Tememy** (Iraq), Secretary, Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations, said that his Government would continue to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. However, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant had used violence against all groups of society, particularly women and children, undermining and destroying infrastructure and displacing a large number of people. Those circumstances had drained the Government's resources, hampering its ability to sustain liberated areas and affecting living standards in the middle and southern

parts of the country. As a result, poverty had increased in areas hosting displaced persons.

143. His Government was working to eliminate terrorism and had drafted a plan to reconstruct liberated areas, which promoted the use of technology and the participation of civil society. The plan focused on treating injuries and provided compensation for children and persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the economic and security situations made it difficult for people to find work. The Government was working to fulfil its obligations and had paid dearly in defence of Iraq and the world. The international community must therefore support Iraq in achieving flexible and sustainable cities and towns.

144. **Mr. Moncada** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations, said that the United Nations system would be facing significant challenges in the forthcoming years, particularly attacks against the basic principles of multilateralism and sovereignty over natural resources, as well as colonialism, war and unilateral economic measures, such as those imposed on his country in a constant endeavour to undermine its economic and political stability. Such measures had been rejected by Heads of State and Government with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and were contrary to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States.

145. In order to build resilience, States and societies must adapt to, transform and recover from adverse impacts in a timely and efficient manner. In 2016, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had been one of the first countries to present its voluntary national review, in which it had indicated the progress made on integrating the 2030 Agenda into the national plan and the zero-poverty plan for 2019. The Government had continued its work, despite the current adverse situation.

146. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda required efforts on the part of all stakeholders, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was determined to work towards an inclusive and resilient agenda that strengthened the commitments of all to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development; balanced social, economic and environmental concerns; and restored the spirit of solidarity.

147. **Ms. Cordova Soria** (Plurinational State of Bolivia), Deputy Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations, said that, under President Evo Morales, her Government had prioritized eradicating poverty and reducing inequality and had adopted a development paradigm that benefited from indigenous knowledge and was in harmony with nature. In the past 12 years, per capita gross domestic product had tripled, and her country led the region in economic growth, with an average of 4 per cent per year. With regard to reducing inequality, in 2005, the richest 10 per cent of the population had earned 128 times the income of the poorest 10 per cent. In 2018, that gap had been reduced by nearly two thirds. Extreme poverty had also been reduced, from 38 per cent to less than 17 per cent.

148. Access to drinking water and basic sanitation was critical to reducing poverty and inequality, and water was a fundamental right for life under the Constitution. The Government had significantly increased related investments. As a result, 85.6 per cent of Bolivians had access to drinking water and the infant mortality rate had decreased by over 52 per cent, to 24 per thousand live births. Those achievements had only been possible because her Government had taken its national resources out of the hands of transnational corporations and given them back to the people, creating State-run companies to manage water, electricity, telecommunications and renewable and non-renewable energy sources.

149. While the Government had taken decisive action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and improve the standard of living for its citizens, it also noted that living in harmony, equilibrium and complementarity applied not only to human beings but also to Mother Earth and all living things. The only way to promote sustainable development and a fair balance between the economic, social and environmental needs of current and future generations was to promote policies that encouraged living in harmony with nature, to tackle the causes of poverty and inequality at the national and international levels, to transform the capitalistic model of development that exploited some for the benefit of others, to avoid excessive consumption and production, and to denounce the practice of prioritizing military expenditures over investments in development.

150. **Ms. Agladze** (Georgia), Deputy Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, said that her country had been among the first to present its voluntary national review. At the national level, the Sustainable Development Goals Coordination Council oversaw the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in line with existing national strategies and action plans, and ensured effective communication and dialogue among public agencies. An electronic monitoring system had been adopted to distribute up-to-date information about the country's performance on the Goal targets. Since

2015, her Government had been reforming the policy planning system, establishing a solid methodological foundation for the review process and integrating the Goals into national policy planning.

151. Sustainable urban planning contributed significantly to health and well-being by promoting environmental benefits and economic growth, and its cross-cutting nature required concerted efforts. The Government prioritized equal access to water resources, quality drinking water for human health and the sustainable use of resources. In that connection, it was developing a legislative framework for the sustainable management of water resources. With regard to air quality, the Government was improving air quality standards to bring them in line with European standards, promoting green driving and sustainable public transport, introducing a new electronic air pollution reporting system and adopting measures to improve fuel quality under new national standards. The establishment of a modern waste management system was also among the key priorities. The Government had set ambitious targets to regularly collect 100 per cent of municipal waste. A new waste code and relevant secondary legislation provided regulations on collection, reuse, recycling and other waste recovery solutions. Furthermore, Georgia was moving toward the European model for the sustainable management of forest resources, and a forest code had already been drafted. Those targets were also given priority in terms of financing. Lastly, given the lack of data, there was a substantial need to upgrade national statistical research capacities.

152. **Mr. Ilnytskyi** (Ukraine), Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations, said that his country was struggling to build stability and security in the face of the ongoing foreign aggression and occupation of parts of its territory. Nevertheless, his Government remained fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda. An interministerial working group had been established to adapt the Sustainable Development Goal indicators to the national context, in partnership with the United Nations country team in Ukraine, and national consultations had been held with participants from government institutions, United Nations agencies, academia and civil society. The Government prioritized international cooperation and was working to fulfil its commitments to improve education, promote gender equality and ensure environmental sustainability.

153. Ukraine welcomed United Nations initiatives to eradicate global hunger, as his country well knew the price of that tragedy. In November 2018, the Government would mark a day of remembrance for the Holodomor victims, to honour the millions who had died during the famine orchestrated by the communist regime. Ukraine stood ready to assist in addressing food insecurity for the more than 850 million people in the world who were starving.

154. In 2016, the international community had completed the United Nations action plan on Chernobyl to 2016 and the Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions. However, sustained effort was needed to continue to prioritize post-Chernobyl recovery in inter-agency and international agendas.

155. Sustainable development could not be achieved without sustainable peace and security. Constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue could facilitate the widest possible cooperation, thereby ensuring that emerging sustainable development challenges received appropriate consideration and were addressed in a mutually beneficial way.

156. **Mr. Kickert** (Austria), Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, said that his Government fully supported the ambitious reform agenda of the Secretary-General and welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/279. Efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda must be accelerated in order to reach the common goals. According to the 2018 report entitled Global Responsibilities: Implementing the Goals, Austria ranked among the top 10 countries in terms of progress.

157. With regard to Goal 6, his Government reiterated its readiness to share its expertise in water governance and integrated water management. In addition to being a matter of life and death, water was a question of dignity and a human right. During the high-level political forum, Austria had hosted a side event focused on the nexus between water and forests. Concerning Goal 7, the Government had partnered with UNIDO and Sustainable Energy for All to establish the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres, with a view to assisting countries and regional organizations in overcoming barriers to the development of sustainable energy markets.

158. Space technologies could also contribute to nearly all the Goals. The "Space2030" agenda would act as a driver of sustainable development by promoting a global space partnership to assist in monitoring progress, establishing early warning systems, sustainably managing resources and addressing climate change. The Symposium on Space for the Sustainable Development Goals, organized in partnership with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, would take place in September 2018.

159. The international community would only be able to fulfil its shared commitments if the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was firmly based on the protection and promotion of human rights. Furthermore, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls were crucial to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

160. **Mr. Kalsakau** (Vanuatu), Deputy Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations, said that rural-urban migration, demographic shifts and climate change were transforming the region, and innovative solutions were necessary to address the complex, interconnected impacts of long-term development. For his country, climate change, particularly slow-onset events, posed the biggest threat to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Cyclone Pam, which had hit Vanuatu in March 2015, continued to be a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of unabated climate change: reversing development gains, reducing the quality of life, disrupting efforts to eradicate poverty and severely impeding future economic growth. Urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts was therefore essential to creating resilience for small island developing States and least developed countries.

161. Clean water was vital to reducing disease burden and improving health, well-being and productivity. While fresh water sources were fragile and limited, particularly in rural communities, the Government was working to ensure equitable access to clean water sources for all. It would therefore welcome assistance in deploying new and existing technologies and processes that could improve the condition and sustainability of water resources. The Government also sought to provide access to energy for 100 per cent of the population and achieve 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030.

162. Vanuatu would graduate from least developed country status in December 2020 and looked forward to enhanced international support to assist in its transition to a middle-income country, particularly in support of its efforts to achieve the Goals.

163. **The President**, speaking in his national capacity, said that accelerated action and collaborative partnerships between Governments and stakeholders were necessary to meet the persistent challenges to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Belgium had presented its voluntary national review in 2017, and government officials at the federal, regional and local levels continued to take concrete actions. The inclusion and participation of stakeholders and the private sector were crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

164. A transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies was dependent upon the responsible management of natural resources. His Government was committed to improving air quality and conserving biodiversity, particularly through partnerships with landowners and investments in the Natura 2000 network of the European Union, and called for a robust international framework for biodiversity after 2020. The Government was also redoubling efforts to transition to a circular economy, focusing on ecological innovation, sustainable public procurement and the development of green and blue infrastructure. The forthcoming United Nations Environment Assembly would focus on innovative solutions to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable production and consumption. Information and communication technologies, connectivity and innovation could also be catalysts of sustainable change.

165. Given that climate change could exacerbate fragile situations and contribute to increased tension and conflicts, the international community must recognize the interdependence between peace and security, sustainable development and human rights.

166. **Ms. Rienning-Baek** (Denmark), speaking as a youth delegate, said that the European youth delegates had organized a side event at the high-level political forum focusing on potential solutions for future cities. With regard to Goal 11, city planning required a long-term co-creative process in which local stakeholders could address mobility issues with solutions that met their specific needs. Accountability was also essential to achieving progress. A number of Member States, including Denmark, needed to examine their production and consumption practices, under Goal 12. The principles of a circular economy were slowly being integrated into business models and personal lifestyles. Developed countries must urgently assume their responsibilities in that regard and reduce consumption. With regard to Goal 17, specifically intergenerational partnerships, she noted that only 10 European countries had invited youth delegates to participate in the high-level political forum.

167. Youth figured prominently in the Danish development strategy, as both a cross-cutting theme and a stand-alone issue. The Government sought to engage young people in a meaningful way, as partners and leaders rather than simply beneficiaries. It had commissioned a review of youth-led development engagements, consisting of a review team, a youth advisory panel and an online survey for young people. While Denmark had a solid base of expertise, there were also areas where it could improve. For example, as a result of the review process, it had been recommended

that young people should be included in the voluntary national review process.

168. Youth participation remained a privilege rather than a right. Her delegation appealed to Member States to encourage diverse, meaningful inclusion and participation in preparing their voluntary national reviews for 2019, whether from young people; members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities; indigenous peoples; persons with disabilities or other stakeholders. She urged Member States to recognize youth as key stakeholders and partners in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

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President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
later: Ms. Chatardova ..... (Czechia)

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Closing of the segment

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

(d) Thematic discussion (E/2018/61)

Panel discussion: "Leveraging new technologies for the Sustainable Development Goals"

1. *A short video was shown presenting the work of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on information and communications technology (ICT) for sustainable development.*

2. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of the Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)), moderator, said that technology had the potential to positively impact every Sustainable Development Goal. The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation recognized the contribution of digital technologies towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations as a platform for dialogue in the digital age.

3. The spread of ICT could accelerate human progress, bridge the digital divide and develop knowledge societies. New technologies such as artificial intelligence could transform areas as diverse and critical as education, health care, finance, mobility and energy. However, they also posed technical, ethical and socioeconomic challenges. The threat of another digital divide was a matter of concern. The needs of all segments of the population in developing and least developed countries must therefore be taken into account.

4. ITU had hosted two Artificial Intelligence for Good Global Summits to raise awareness of the opportunities and risks associated with such emerging technologies, and to provide a platform for international dialogue. The questions of how to ensure privacy and transparency and make data available to all must also be addressed. ITU had played a central role in the digital transformation, including through its work on international standards. It had also formed partnerships with other United Nations bodies on the United 4 Smart Sustainable Cities initiative and was working with Smart Dubai to develop an index of sustainable cities.

5. New technologies should be leveraged to accelerate progress on every Sustainable Development Goal. Leaving no one behind was central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and efforts must be redoubled to bridge the digital divide at a time of great technological change. Women and girls, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and older persons were disproportionately represented among those with little or no access to ICT. The benefits of digital innovation were crucial in building a more sustainable world. In order to address new opportunities responsibly, discussions on how interdisciplinary and cooperative approaches could facilitate a more inclusive digital future for all were necessary.

6. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana), panellist, said that as the poverty gap in Ghana was the result of a technology gap her Government was committed to prioritizing science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, with an emphasis on socioeconomic activities. The national road map for science, technology and innovation ensured that technology drove the implementation of all national policies and programmes. Significant investments were being made in research and development in order to find solutions to issues of national concern, while contributing to global efforts. Strong partnerships between academic institutions and industry ensured that research outputs were turned into industrial applications, reducing imports and increasing exports, creating jobs and advancing economic growth.

7. Her Government was working to formalize the economy by introducing digitization to operations, land ownership and banking systems, among other measures. Strategies were in place to ensure that the goals of the national road map were met, while supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, by integrating science, technology and innovation into the formulation of policies, and working to address the gap between policy formulation and implementation.

8. Investments in research and development had been scaled up, with the aim of finding local solutions to challenges. An innovation and research commercialization centre had been established, seeking to create strategic opportunities for investment in the latest technological advancements and incentives to support research by the private sector. Ghana was prepared to form partnerships with other countries and organizations to facilitate the sharing of technology and was currently promoting the development of technologies in new and emerging disciplines, including biotechnology, microelectronics and laser technology. Engaging with young people to promote interest in science and technology, particularly among women, was

important. Science, technology and innovation were fundamental to development in Ghana, and her Government was committed to leaving no one behind.

9. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs), panellist, said that the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66) showed that such technologies were changing ways of living and working. The rapid pace of technological change demonstrated the potential to accelerate progress towards the Goals while safeguarding against the associated dangers. Poverty eradication remained the top priority, and technology could be harnessed to work towards its achievement, for example, through innovations in medical technologies and sustainable food systems.

10. Emerging technologies had a far-reaching impact on society, the economy and the environment, and progress in one area of technology fuelled and accelerated progress in others. Nonetheless, the benefits were unequally distributed, and new technologies could bring with them adverse consequences. Automation, artificial intelligence and robotics could lead to unemployment or underemployment, and were associated with concerns over privacy, security and human rights.

11. Notwithstanding the risks, the potential benefits of new technologies were so significant that they could not be ignored. Preparing for the current and future impact of technological change with inclusive and effective policies on technology for sustainable development was crucial. At the national level, countries would need to adapt the supply of skills to the rapidly evolving labour market. Collaborative efforts between stakeholders were necessary and should be guided by commitment to the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations system must continue to support efforts to adapt and harness new technologies for the common good.

12. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University), panellist, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that, notwithstanding the tremendous power of emerging technologies to address global challenges, the non-neutrality inherent in their design and implementation carried the risk of unintended negative consequences and made them vulnerable to manipulation. Consideration of the ethical impact of technology was therefore essential to effectively leveraging emerging technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. In advancing an ethically conscious approach to technological innovation, emphasis must be placed on social inclusion, which required an understanding of the characteristics of affected communities and the power dynamics within them, and of the technical, legal, regulatory and economic contexts in which technologies were implemented. There was also a need for consideration of technology governance frameworks and of identity and privacy issues, in particular personal information requirements for access to online services, given the potential exposure of such information to manipulation and the consequent risk of exploitation of vulnerable populations. In that connection, transparency was essential not only with regard to the data used by algorithms and the biases inherent in their design, but also with regard to ownership and control of data. Efforts must also be made to expand access to digital technologies and improve digital literacy, and to implement effective safety and security measures to protect personal data.

14. International cooperation should be leveraged to promote progress in the areas of digital inclusion, digital rights, data governance and the establishment of standards for the ethical development of technology. In her work as a Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center, she focused on identifying concrete ways to apply ethical standards in implementing technology and had recently directed the development of an ethical framework for the design of blockchain technology.

15. **Mr. Hoshino** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals), lead discussant, said that the 2018 multi-stakeholder forum had focused on how new technologies could be leveraged to achieve specific Goals, taking into account their positive effects and risks.

16. Committed to maximizing the benefits and minimizing the negative impact of technological developments, Japan had introduced two main initiatives to harness new technologies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. The first, Society 5.0, was a plan for achieving a society in which solutions to social problems and the attainment of individual fulfilment were mutually consistent and in line with the Goals. That plan served as a guideline for the implementation of his Government's science and technology policy for the period from 2016 to 2021 and was an integral part of its action plan for the achievement of the Goals. Conceived as the fifth iteration in the history of human social development, following the hunting and gathering, agrarian, industrial, and information societies, Society 5.0 was human-centred and characterized by the advanced integration of social spaces through the implementation

of emerging technologies such as the Internet of things, big data and artificial intelligence. Envisaged innovations included the use of drones and self-driving vehicle systems to improve logistical efficiency and resource distribution, in particular to underpopulated rural areas, and the use of artificial intelligence in patient care and rehabilitation.

17. Society 5.0 was being carried out in partnership with Keidanren, an organization composed of more than 1,300 Japanese companies and underpinned by a code of corporate behaviour, a central pillar of which was the implementation of Society 5.0 for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, Keidanren had recently launched a website showcasing the initiatives undertaken by member companies to harness technological innovations in order to provide goods and services to address the needs of all members of society. The model underlying Society 5.0 had been formulated with consideration of the ethical and human dimensions of technology and could be adapted to many national contexts.

18. Like a number of other Member States, Japan had developed a national road map for advancing science, technology and innovation to support the Sustainable Development Goals. Such road maps provided tools for monitoring progress towards established objectives; for measuring the positive and negative impact of new technologies in order to develop desirable pathways towards achieving the Goals; and for integrating cutting-edge technologies into domestic strategies and policies on the basis of national priorities, using a multidisciplinary approach. The 2018 multi-stakeholder forum had provided an opportunity for Member States to share their experiences in developing and implementing road maps. He particularly welcomed the efforts made by Ghana to promote education and capacity-building in the area of science and technology, including among women. The importance of harnessing traditional and local knowledge had also been emphasized during the forum.

19. Addressing the ethical impact and risks of new technologies required ongoing dialogue among stakeholders. Despite the challenges they presented, science, technology and innovation had played a critical role in protecting populations against natural disasters and in improving human lives. New technologies must be leveraged to ensure the effective use of limited resources in support of the Sustainable Development Goals.

20. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals), lead discussant, said that, although it had been transforming the global landscape for some time, technological innovation was a new issue on the United Nations agenda. At a time of unprecedented optimism among Member States about the opportunities afforded by new technologies, those opportunities must be leveraged in support of development. He also welcomed the initiatives undertaken by Ghana in that regard and highlighted the experience of Mexico in implementing a project to assist indigenous women in processing organic agave syrup through the use of solar energy.

21. As emphasized in the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66), the benefits provided and challenges posed by emerging technologies with regard to economic and social development and environmental protection must be assessed. Guided by the Goals and targets, Member States must be proactive in responding to technological change, including by adjusting education systems and training programmes to meet the demands of the digital age; investing in innovation; and implementing technology strategies providing for the allocation of funding for scientific training, in particular for youth and women.

22. To minimize the disruptive effect of technological change on operations and service delivery, Governments must build resilience by exploring different ways of increasing their productivity, as well as economic productivity, and by establishing innovative systems to capitalize on new technologies. As highlighted by the Secretary-General, the challenges associated with the use of labour-saving technology must be addressed not by impeding the development of such technology but by adapting it to existing working methods and social contexts.

23. By providing capacity-building, compiling and disseminating information on best practices and promoting joint solutions, the United Nations, and the Council in particular, played a critical role in advancing international cooperation in the formulation of public policies to leverage technology for development. In that regard, as proposed during the 2018 multi-stakeholder forum, the Organization should establish a database of policies that had enabled effective resilience in the face of technological change. The ethical implications of new technologies must also be taken into consideration, without hindering innovation.

24. As underscored by the Secretary-General, United Nations platforms must adapt to facilitate discussions by

Member States and other stakeholders on frameworks, good practices and areas in which protocols, principles or other mechanisms or incentives were required. The multi-stakeholder forum, the Internet Governance Forum and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development provided valuable platforms for debate among a broad range of stakeholders. Forums such as the Artificial Intelligence for Global Good Summit, the Blockchain Summit series and the Global Sustainable Technology and Innovation Conference were also important to advancing global dialogue on critical issues.

25. Technology and innovation were indispensable to sustainable development. Drawing on evidence-based analysis, stakeholders must craft public policies to advance the well-being of all people, while preventing duplication of efforts and the scattering of resources.

26. **Ms. Blanco** (Director of Public Policy and International Relations, Global System for Mobile Communications Association), lead discussant, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that there had been a dramatic transformation in the available means of communication since the 1990s. Whereas earlier means of accessing information had been restricted to newspaper, radio and television, and then to somewhat unreliable and at times irrelevant Internet content and prohibitively expensive mobile technology, now 5 billion people had access to mobile technology. Current mobile technologies were helping to reverse exclusion from social dynamics. Certain technologies, such as 5G, blockchain and artificial intelligence, could be harnessed to create more resilient, egalitarian and inclusive societies and would allow development organizations to strengthen the efficiency of their programmes, reach wider audiences with fewer resources and optimize the experience of their beneficiaries and donors.

27. Although there were risks inherent to an increasingly digital, wireless world, concerted action and strong collaboration among the private sector, Governments and the multilateral system could help to stem such threats as the weaponization of data and the inequalities exacerbated by a growing digital divide. ICT and mobile technologies had proved their place in capitalizing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Rather than stopping the international community, risks should fuel collaboration around common goals.

28. The Global System for Mobile Communications Association stood ready to continue decisive action towards achieving sustainable development and the worldwide implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; however, that work could not be done in isolation. Governments were needed to create enabling policy environments for investment and innovation. The private sector already possessed a repository of best practices that was available in multiple languages and arranged by topic, country and region. The private sector should continue exploring how to place that material in the service of Governments and the United Nations. The private sector also needed the United Nations system to support its efforts, particularly at the local level, to reach the most vulnerable, and to better inform citizens and Member States how technology could be harnessed to deliver on the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.

29. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) recalled early work done in the 1980s when the potential of technology to influence social and economic development was first recognized. Remarkably, the 1985 report of the Maitland Commission, entitled: "The Missing Link", had noted that three quarters of the 600 million fixed-line phones in the world were concentrated in just nine countries. The findings of the report had spurred international dialogue, leading to the formulation of targets and setting the stage for dramatic change.

30. **Ms. Martinez** (Mexico) said that there was a need for digital transformation agendas to become State policies with the same relevance as education, health and employment. It was also important to adopt such new technologies as blockchain and artificial intelligence, focusing on context and challenges.

31. A white paper on artificial intelligence, drafted by her Government with the support of the private sector and academia, had prioritized the following: incorporating artificial intelligence in the customization and personalization of public services, based on the needs and preferences of individuals; aligning all research and development programmes with the potential use of artificial intelligence in economic and social sectors; building capacities for the jobs of the future; and strengthening the national data infrastructure, as well as frameworks to study the ethical use of artificial intelligence. In August, Mexico would launch an initiative to create a platform to document cases in which technology had been used efficiently, transparently and accountably. Mexico wished to share its initiatives with the international community so that together they could strengthen mechanisms of cooperation between Member States for the future.

32. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana) said that there was a critical need to leverage local and new

technologies. In so doing, the international community should identify the opportunities created, examine any associated risks and develop the human capacities necessary to ensure the appropriate application of the relevant technologies.

33. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University) said that new technologies offered a promising future and the international community should not lose sight of that fact in its discussions of how to minimize potentially harmful technologies. Instead, the focus should be placed on how ubiquitous and affordable technologies could be leveraged for the good of the many. The goal was never to create harmful technology; rather, the point was to connect millions of people to systems to which they previously did not have access.

34. Local solutions were another critical component. Despite differences in context, some of the challenges were universal. Although views differed as to what exactly constituted ethical actions, efforts to develop technology ethically should be intentional and context-specific. The objective was to maximize the social impact of technology, and the boundaries of that technology must be drawn to include people. The most interesting things happened at the intersection between technology and people.

35. **Ms. Blanco** (Director of Public Policy and International Relations, Global System for Mobile Communications Association) said that there could be cultural as well as context-specific reasons why people who had access to certain technologies were not using them. For example, in some countries cultural barriers might discourage women from using mobile phones or the high costs of mobile applications might deter people from paying to download them. In the latter case, the public and private sectors could work together to devise more affordable options.

36. **Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals) said that there were two clear paths ahead. One pertained to the Sustainable Development Goals and the challenges inherent to achieving the 169 targets. The second path pertained to the principles of regulation, codes of conduct and principles of ethics. He welcomed the fact that the central issues presently under discussion, which had hitherto been discussed in a marginal way, were now at the forefront of the Organization's work.

37. **Mr. Hoshino** (Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Co-Chair of the third annual multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals) said that Society 5.0 was value-oriented and ethics-driven. Although profit-oriented, Japanese companies agreed that the Sustainable Development Goals could be achieved through a combination of technology and business. Mainstreaming the Goals in business activities and collaboration between public and private sectors in a value-driven and ethics-oriented way would naturally contribute to a better society.

38. It was important to capture the positive results of science and technology, pre-empt any negative impact that could be caused by technologies and consider how to make the best use of science and technology. He urged the international community to move from dialogue to action. A road map to contextualize sustainable development indicators was one way to put ideas into practice.

39. **Mr. Ahmad** (Observer for the Islamic Development Bank) said that the Islamic Development Bank served 57 countries, all of which were considered developing countries. It had launched a $500 million technology fund intended to finance innovative ideas to achieve six of the Sustainable Development Goals. It had also launched a digital platform to feed into the pipeline of the projects intended to transform the fund. He asked the panellists to address the issue of financing, how the ideas expressed during the meeting could be funded, and how to find more effective financing mechanisms.

40. **Mr. De Vasijani** (France) said that technologies had the power to transform societies and economies. However, tackling certain challenges was not entirely a question of technology. Technologies were often presented from an economic or social standpoint, with their technical and ethical risks thoroughly explored but their potential impact on health and the environment often overlooked. For example, in terms of health care, one might consider the effects of using certain materials. Was anyone present incorporating that dimension into their work? Ultimately, the 2030 Agenda was a holistic and comprehensive agenda. In the context of the three pillars of sustainable development, it was important not to forget the environmental viability of the technologies being harnessed for the benefit of people.

41. **Ms. Bogdan-Martin** (Chief of Strategic Planning and Membership Department of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that her organization was working very closely with a variety of international governmental organizations on digital

health, e-skills programmes and the use of technology to reduce hunger, among other initiatives.

42. **Ms. Lapointe** (Senior Fellow at the Beeck Center for Social Impact and Innovation, Georgetown University) said that technology should not be looked at in isolation. It was important to understand the entire complex landscape surrounding a technology, including its financing, and to bring together as many different people, organizations and backgrounds as necessary to achieve the intended outcome.

43. **Ms. Appiagyei** (Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovations of Ghana) said that Governments should make a conscious effort to assign 30 per cent of their resources to research and development activities. For its part, her Government had identified people who implemented local technology, including one innovator who extracted electricity from cassava. Such people should be encouraged financially. Ghana was also looking at innovative e-health programmes and a medication-sharing system. With respect to environmental concerns, her Government had been deploying drones to pre-empt further deterioration of already degraded lands. It was also considering using drones to cultivate land for a variety of other programmes.

The meeting was suspended at 5.20 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2, E/2018/L.23 and E/2018/L.28)

Adoption of the draft ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Council (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2)

44. *Ms. Chatardova (Czechia) took the Chair.*

45. **The President** drew attention to the draft ministerial declaration of the Council's 2018 high-level political forum on the themes "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" and "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" (E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2). She said that the draft ministerial declaration contained no programme budget implications.

46. The United States delegation had submitted a total of four amendments: two amendments to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.23, and two amendments to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.28.

47. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Chair of the Group of 77 and China, whose delegation was not currently a member of the Council, requested a recorded vote on the proposed amendments to paragraphs 28 and 12 of the draft ministerial declaration.

48. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 was intended to protect the fundamental principles of sustainable development. The Council should not consent to language that promoted development cooperation as a quid pro quo between developing countries and their development partners.

49. *A recorded vote was taken on the first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.23.*

In favour:

Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam.

50. *The first proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration was rejected by 31 votes to 14, with no abstentions.*

51. **The President** drew attention to the second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23.

52. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 would ensure that the draft ministerial declaration was aligned with the April 2018 outcome from the forum on financing for development follow-up. The Council must respect the independence of the World Trade Organization (WTO) from the United Nations system. In addition, the amendment properly referenced

the 2030 Agenda and the important role of trade in promoting sustainable development.

53. *A recorded vote was taken on the second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23.*

In favour:

United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Japan, Republic of Korea.

54. *The second proposed amendment to paragraph 28 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.23, was rejected by 42 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.*

55. **The President** drew attention to the first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28.

56. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the ministerial declaration would remove the reference to the "right to development", which was a concept with no internationally-agreed meaning. Furthermore, there were challenges to making any such right consistent with the fundamental human rights recognized by the international community as universal.

57. *A recorded vote was taken on the first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28.*

In favour:

United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Belgium, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

58. *The first proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 1 of document E/2018/L.28, was rejected by 31 votes to 1, with 14 abstentions.*

59. **The President** drew attention to the second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28.

60. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that his delegation's second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration would remove language inserted by certain delegations on foreign occupation that unnecessarily politicized the declaration.

61. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that her delegation supported the proposed amendment, as paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration contained politicized language that served those who aimed to single out Israel. As Israel had stated repeatedly throughout the negotiations and on past occasions, such language did not belong in the discussions of the Council or the high-level political forum.

62. *A recorded vote was taken on the second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28.*

In favour:

Canada, United States of America.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Belgium, Chad, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

63. *The second proposed amendment to paragraph 12 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in paragraph 2 of document E/2018/L.28, was rejected by 30 votes to 2, with 14 abstentions.*

64. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested by the delegation of the Russian Federation on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

65. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was committed to the empowerment of women and girls, the protection of their rights and elimination of all forms of violence. The 2030 Agenda set precise guidelines for cooperation and did not need to be modified. The Russian delegation deeply regretted that, during the negotiations on the draft ministerial declaration, there had been a deviation from the principle of transparency and the necessary efforts had not been made to take the views of all groups of States into consideration. In particular, paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration contained language that was not in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5 or the agreed outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women. It also deviated from international consensus on the topic. The Russian Federation could therefore not support the adoption of paragraph 16. Drawing attention to the fruitless nature of attempts by certain States to impose their approaches to gender on other States, he called for delegations to reject paragraph 16 and to search for solutions based on constructive and mutually respectful dialogue.

66. **Mr. Cripton** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Uruguay, said that his delegation wished to reiterate the statement that it had delivered with respect to the vote on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration at the 24th meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. He urged all members of the Council to vote in favour of retaining the paragraph.

67. *A recorded vote was taken on paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

Against:

Belarus, Guyana, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Chad, China, Iraq.

68. *Paragraph 16 of the draft ministerial declaration, contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2, was adopted by 35 votes to 5, with 4 abstentions.*

69. **The President** drew attention to the draft ministerial declaration as a whole, as contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

70. **Ms. Crabtree** (Turkey) said that her delegation dissociated itself from the fifth sentence of paragraph 23 of the draft ministerial declaration, which failed to reflect the scope that had been agreed under target 6.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals and in fact went beyond the agreed language. Turkey had conveyed a suggested replacement text to the President of the Council, as a compromise solution. Regrettably, that attempt to fairly and appropriately reflect the relevant Goal had not received the support of certain States and groups. Turkey was fully committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and its cross-cutting nature required the adoption of a fair approach in all respects.

71. *At the request of the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken on the draft ministerial*

declaration as a whole, as contained in document E/2018/L.20–E/HLPF/2018/L.2.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

United States of America.

Abstaining:

None.

72. *The draft ministerial declaration as a whole was adopted by 46 votes to 1, with no abstentions.*

73. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her delegation deeply regretted the fact that a Member State had requested a recorded vote on the entire document. Venezuela supported the declaration and wished to reiterate certain fundamental points. Sovereign use of natural resources was critical for the economic and social development of peoples, as was the fair distribution of the benefits of natural resources among citizens. The implementation of coercive unilateral measures against States was an obstacle to development that not only violated the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but was also inconsistent with the principles of equal rights among States, self-determination of peoples, non-intervention in internal affairs and the inalienable right of all States to choose their own political, economic and cultural systems. Venezuela had itself suffered from the imposition of such measures and called for the cessation of policies aimed at changing the country's legitimately constituted Government.

74. Venezuela also wished to reiterate its reservation to target 12.c of the Sustainable Development Goals, as its reference to the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies was interventionist and interfered in the public policies of States. Venezuela would not accept any interference in its energy policy.

75. **Mr. Lawrence** (United States of America) said that throughout the negotiating process, his delegation had offered numerous amendments in a spirit of compromise. It therefore regretted the need to call for a vote and to vote against the declaration owing to inappropriate language on foreign occupation and trade, the elevation of an inappropriate development model and the domestic policy rhetoric of a single Member State.

76. While his delegation recognized that development facilitated the enjoyment of human rights, there was no agreed definition of the "right to development" and such a right could not easily be made consistent with the fundamental human rights recognized by the international community. All development, including sustainable development, must be undertaken in a manner consistent with human rights. There were no circumstances in which development goals permitted countries to deviate from their human rights obligations and commitments. His delegation therefore continued to encourage all States to fulfil their human rights obligations and commitments regardless of their level of development.

77. Given its strong support for conflict prevention, human rights promotion and good governance, his delegation was very disappointed that it was unable to reach an agreement with its partners and that certain Member States had once again sought to politicize development issues at the United Nations by including language on foreign occupation in the declaration.

78. With respect to references to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate, he noted that the United States of America had announced its intention to withdraw from the Agreement unless suitable terms for reengagement were identified.

79. The United States of America disassociated itself from the language in paragraphs 24 and 28 of the declaration to that extent that it encouraged financial assistance to the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and characterized technology transfer that was not clearly indicated to be both voluntary and on mutually-agreed terms. Any such language would have no standing in future negotiations. His delegation continued to oppose language that would undermine intellectual property rights.

80. His delegation reiterated its objections to the reference to "mutually beneficial cooperation" in paragraph 28. The terms "win-win cooperation" and "mutually beneficial cooperation" had been promoted interchangeably by a single Member State with a view to inserting its domestic policy agenda into United Nations contexts. As a result, those terms had become synonymous with a model of development that was dangerous to sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

81. The United States of America also objected to the language on trade contained in paragraph 28. His delegation did not view the United Nations as the appropriate body to opine on WTO and did not support references to WTO matters in United Nations documents. Furthermore, it was not acceptable for Member States to attempt to prescribe the appropriate characteristics of an international organization that was independent of the United Nations system or to comment on the membership of that international organization.

82. His delegation noted that the 2030 Agenda called for countries to implement the Agenda in a manner consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law. Implementation must respect and be without prejudice to the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including negotiations, and did not prejudge or serve as a precedent for decisions and actions under way in other forums. For example, the 2030 Agenda did not represent a commitment to provide new market access for goods or services. Nor did it interpret or alter any WTO agreement or decision, including the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property.

83. With respect to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, much of the trade-related language in the outcome document was obsolete. It was therefore immaterial, and the reaffirmation of that document had no standing for ongoing work in negotiations involving trade.

84. His delegation reiterated its support for disaster risk reduction initiatives, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Such assistance helped recipients to build a culture of greater preparedness, promote greater resilience and achieve self-reliance.

85. Lastly, he wished to underscore that the ministerial declaration was non-binding and neither created rights and obligations under international law, nor gave rise to financial commitments.

86. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that her delegation regretted that language proposed by the Group of 77 and China from paragraph 38 of the document entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which reaffirmed the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States, had not been included in the ministerial declaration. During the negotiations, the Group had strongly favoured reinforcing the language in the section on the means of implementation and making proper reference to the principles enshrined in the 2030 Agenda. Those principles were also contained in many agreed multilateral outcomes. Although the text of the ministerial declaration did not fulfil all of her delegation's aspirations, it had decided to vote in favour of the document in a spirit of multilateralism.

87. **Mr. Lu** Yuhui (China) said that his delegation regretted that the entire ministerial declaration had been put to a vote, including the consensus language on the 2030 Agenda. The declaration reaffirmed the need to promote a universal and equitable multilateral trade system under WTO as well as meaningful trade liberalization measures, language that served the interests of all Member States. Trade was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and vital to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

88. Any challenges that emerged in the course of the development process must be resolved through development. Similarly, any issues that arose as a result of globalization must be resolved by moving globalization forward in the right direction towards more openness, inclusivity, balance, universal benefit and win-win outcomes. All countries should hold fast to the principle of mutual benefit and intensify mutually beneficial cooperation.

89. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation supported the adoption of the ministerial declaration, with the exception of paragraph 16 thereof. With respect to the wording in paragraph 17, which concerned the participation of children in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, his delegation believed that children who had not yet reached the legal age of majority should engage in such participation solely within the framework of their respective families and schools.

90. His delegation noted with disappointment that the ministerial declaration had not once been adopted by consensus in the three preceding years and that, in each of those years, there had been an increase in the number of votes on separate paragraphs. A vote on the declaration as a whole was even more unfortunate. Moreover, while Member States had constantly been urged to improve the work of the Charter bodies of the United Nations, such as the Council, States had actively been departing from the precedents that had been developed by their predecessors over many years. In particular, there had been a long-standing tradition that a resolution would be put forward for adoption by the President of the Council only if it enjoyed universal support, and, in cases where such consensus had not been reached, the resolution would instead be put forward by an interested party. That tradition had been abandoned.

91. **Mr. Elkhishin** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group had negotiated constructively and in good faith to arrive at a balanced and substantive outcome document. It had presented comprehensive and concrete proposals during the informal consultations and had also stressed that eradicating poverty, ending hunger and ensuring food security were indispensable for achieving sustainable development.

92. The Group reaffirmed that the ambitious nature of the 2030 Agenda required strong means of implementation, particularly for developing countries, and the creation of an enabling global environment for development. It also reaffirmed the need to address the diverse needs of countries in special situations, in particular African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in conflict, as well as the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries. The Group regretted that some of its proposals had not been incorporated in the ministerial declaration. In that context, reaffirming the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of States, the Group urged States to refrain from promulgating or applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law or the Charter of the United Nations.

93. While the Group had decided to accept the final version of the ministerial declaration, it was extremely disappointed not only that amendments had been proposed at a very late stage, after the negotiations had already concluded and the text had been circulated for adoption, but also that votes had been requested on certain paragraphs. Such actions sent a negative political message regarding collective endeavours to ensure follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

94. The Group reaffirmed the right to development and called for further effective measures to be taken, in accordance with international law, to remove obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples under colonial and foreign occupation. It would continue to promote a universal, rule-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trade system under WTO, as well as meaningful trade liberalization.

95. Three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, there were worrying signs regarding the commitment of the international community to sustainable development. The vote against the adoption of the ministerial declaration by one State was a particular cause for concern.

96. **Ms. Giungi** (Observer for the Holy See) said that her delegation believed that the high-level segment and the high-level political forum were critical in assisting Governments and stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda and ensure that no one was left behind. It regretted that consensus on the ministerial declaration had not been reached, as that principle was integral to success.

97. While affirming the intention of the ministerial declaration, her delegation wished to place on record its reservations to certain concepts contained therein. First, any references to gender and gender equality were understood to be grounded in biological identity that was either male or female, an idea reinforced by the numerous references in the 2030 Agenda to both sexes. Second, the Holy See did not accept the idea that gender was a social construct and disassociated itself from the biological determinist notion that that all gender roles and relations were fixed.

98. Lastly, while the Holy See welcomed the focus on children and youth in paragraph 17 of the ministerial declaration, it was concerned that no reference was made to parents, as their rights and duties must also be taken into account.

99. **The President** invited the Council to take note, under agenda item 5 as a whole, of the World Economic and Social Survey 2018: Frontier technologies for sustainable development (E/2018/50); the report of the Secretary-General on trends and progress in international development cooperation (E/2018/55); the report of the Secretary-General entitled "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities" (E/2018/61); the World economic situation and prospects as of mid-2018 (E/2018/63); the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64); the report of the Secretary-General on harnessing new technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/66); and the note by the Secretary-General entitled "Discussions held during the twenty-first session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on the theme of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council, 'From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities'" (E/2018/71).

100. *It was so decided.*

Closing of the segment

101. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the debates on

the Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum had been evidence-based and thorough. Participants had shared both their success stories and their challenges, which had led to a better understanding of the remaining implementation gaps. That knowledge would help to focus efforts in the coming year. The momentum created by the forum was already being channelled into tangible policy improvements and concrete measures.

102. Greater attention must be paid to the potential impact of technological and demographic changes on every aspect of society. He welcomed the fact that the General Assembly would soon decide to refocus the high-level segment on long-term trends and scenarios, as it was important for there to be a forum where Governments could meet to discuss the future.

103. The following year, the high-level political forum would meet not only in July but also in September, at which point it would review the 2030 Agenda in its entirety.

104. **The President**, highlighting a number of key messages emanating from the Council's deliberations during the segment, said that the Council's engagement, deliberations and policy recommendations would accelerate efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Throughout 2018, the Council's segments and forums and its functional commissions and expert bodies had worked to provide integrated policy options and recommendations, address gaps and contribute to the overall review of progress towards implementation.

105. The high-level segment had also included the ministerial segment of the high-level political forum, the apex global forum for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. All the discussions had reiterated that the 2030 Agenda demanded new ways of thinking and working. Building resilience and sustainability meant that local communities must be engaged. An inclusive approach to policymaking led to better outcomes, with stronger support in implementation, monitoring and review of progress. The Council had considered forward-looking perspectives and ideas that could address the challenges arising from negative trends and trajectories. It had also investigated the potential of new technologies in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

106. Although the high-level segment had made clear that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was uneven, the Council had identified certain bottlenecks and obstacles. Member States must now work together in an inclusive manner to overcome them.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.

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President: Mr. Matjila (Vice-President) ..... (South Africa)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Mr. Matjila (South Africa), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 5: High-level segment (*continued*) (E/2018/61)

(a) Ministerial meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*) (E/2018/64)

General debate (*continued*)

1. **The President** invited the ministerial meeting to resume its general debate on the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies".

2. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan), Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, said that humanity was increasingly caught in a race against time, scrambling to find workable and affordable solutions to complex problems ranging from poverty and world hunger to climate change and the need for inclusive development. The broad scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a challenge in itself: policymakers and planners must ensure that all goals and targets received equal attention. Sadly, that was not happening. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in its *Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2017*, had indicated that the Asia-Pacific region was currently failing to meet two thirds of the targets under the 2030 Agenda. The report painted a gloomy picture with regard to Goal 15, on life on land, and Goal 13, on climate action. It also indicated that the region was not on track to meet Goal 8, on decent work and economic growth, Goal 10, on reducing inequality, or Goal 16, on peace and justice, all largely because the fruits of rapid economic growth had yet to be equitably shared.

3. The lack of a sense of urgency with regard to certain Goals could be detrimental to all of humanity. Global flows of foreign direct investment were rapidly falling, and the mobilization of funds for sustainable development might be the hardest hit. Pakistan therefore welcomed the forthcoming high-level meeting on financing the 2030 Agenda, to be held in September 2018. With world hunger on the rise again, and conflicts, droughts and climate change directly affecting progress on Goal 1, on ending poverty, and Goal 2, on ending hunger, the international community needed to step up its response, with greater focus and honest commitments.

4. The Economic and Social Council was critical to the realization of the 2030 Agenda; however, States must take a leadership role in implementing certain of the Goals, in line with their particular policies, priorities and needs. Pakistan had been among the pioneers in that regard, taking full ownership of the sustainable development agenda: even prior to the formal adoption of the 2030 Agenda, it had started to recalibrate its national policies on the basis of sustainable principles. All the Sustainable Development Goals were embedded in the national plan, Pakistan 2025.

5. **Ms. Lopes De Jesus Pires** (Timor-Leste), Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the United Nations, said that Timor-Leste looked forward to presenting its voluntary national review in 2019. In view of the importance of democratic institutions and good governance to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring inclusiveness and sustaining peace, it was noteworthy that the eighth constitutional Government of Timor-Leste had recently been formed, following unassisted presidential and legislative elections.

6. With regard to Goal 6, on water and sanitation, her Government had made considerable efforts to improve access. Now, approximately 91 per cent of urban dwellers had access to the water supply and approximately 73 per cent had access to sanitation facilities. The Government continued to invest in strengthening access in rural areas, which currently stood at approximately 60 per cent and 30 per cent for water and sanitation, respectively. The Government was also boosting its efforts to improve water security, develop adaptation strategies and build resilience against climate change and natural disasters.

7. Under Goal 7, on access to energy, her Government had prioritized target 7.1, on universal access, and more than 70 per cent of the population currently had access to electricity. Substantial investments and efforts had been made to establish power plants, and access to the power grid was being improved. Achieving target 7.2, on renewable energy, was another priority for Timor-Leste, which had great potential for generating wind, solar and hydro power.

8. With regard to Goal 11, on cities and human settlements, her Government was prioritizing access to housing and improvement to transport systems, which would particularly benefit those living in the most remote, mountainous areas. Under Goal 12, on sustainable consumption and production, her Government had made substantial investments in agricultural infrastructure and machinery. It was providing farmers with subsidized seeds and fertilizer to increase sustainable production and reduce the

country's reliance on imports. Under Goal 15, on land degradation, her Government was promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, including sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation, as a central aspect of sustainable development. Those priorities also supported the diversification of the economy, of which nature-based tourism was a central pillar.

9. Timor-Leste had adopted the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2011–2020, and was one of the founders of the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization. As a small island developing State and a least developed country, Timor-Leste welcomed the establishment of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which it hoped would enable it to strengthen its capacity in science, technology and innovation. Lastly, her country was proud that a Timorese Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador had joined the Peace Boat and the discussions on strategic partnerships and advocacy on oceans and climate change.

10. **Ms. Khyne** (Myanmar), Deputy Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations, said that peace, stability and development in Myanmar had been hindered by protracted internal conflicts for almost seven decades. Her Government was making relentless efforts to escape the trap of poverty and conflict, and to establish a democratic federal union. Myanmar continued to strive for full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development plans and policies. The 2016 national economic policy, which had focused on inclusive growth and development, encapsulated many of the Goals. Her Government was now formulating a comprehensive set of polices under the umbrella of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan. The Plan was closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda, as well as other global and regional development agendas.

11. In view of the vital need to improve access to safe water and sanitation, her Government had been carrying out integrated water resources management, in cooperation with partners. Myanmar was committed to achieving universal access to energy; in, it was working to improve the liquefied petroleum gas value chain and infrastructure to accelerate households' access to clean cooking and heating options. Her Government was making every effort to provide adequate, safe and affordable housing, develop infrastructure and sustainably manage its natural resources. Lastly, it was implementing strategies to halt deforestation, reverse land degradation, increase reforestation and protect threatened species.

12. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals was slow, and the world was not on track to achieve them. Disparities within and among countries were high and funding was inadequate; there was an urgent need for revitalized efforts with inclusive and collaborative partnerships.

13. **Mr. Martel** (Observer for the Pacific Islands Development Forum) said that the small island developing States of the Pacific were on the front line of global challenges. They were directly impacted by climate change, resource depletion, urban growth and threats to health and food security. Resilience was mandatory for Pacific island countries and territories, which continued to advocate urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Without climate resilience, they could not achieve sustainable development.

14. In 2015, Pacific leaders had adopted the Charter of the Pacific Islands Development Forum and launched a South-South multi-stakeholder forum that would ensure broad public participation in regional decision-making and in support of the 2030 Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway). Now with 14 members, the Pacific Islands Development Forum was focusing on a distinctive model of green growth based on the blue economy. It worked to help build resilience at scale in the Pacific, through multi-stakeholder partnerships and its regional strategic plan, which contained tailored solutions for island resilience.

15. In early 2018, the Pacific Islands Development Forum had piloted the Island Resilience Initiative, in partnership with Precovery Labs and the Global Island Partnership, and with support from the Small Grants Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Under the initiative, specific Sustainable Development Goals were prioritized at the local level with a view to building capacity and resilience. The partners were currently seeking to build on the outcome of pilot projects in Palau, Fiji and Marshall Islands and to expand the initiative to other islands in the Pacific, as well as the Caribbean.

16. **Mr. de Rojas** (Observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta) said that the Sovereign Order of Malta had cared for the poor and sick for more than 900 years. It focused on the most marginalized and vulnerable people on the globe, regardless of religion, ethnicity or nationality. The Order was currently managing more than 2,000 projects in over 120 countries around the world, assisting and supporting the human dignity of the neediest through medical, social and humanitarian activities. Its work was fully consistent with the "leave no one behind" theme of the 2030 Agenda and with the

focus of the 2018 high-level political forum on building sustainable and resilient societies.

17. Currently, a major area of work for the Order was helping refugees, migrants and displaced persons around the world, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. It provided first aid and emergency assistance, in addition to supporting long-term development projects in countries of origin, transit and destination. For instance, it was assisting refugees from Syria in hospitals at the border with Turkey, and its rescue teams in the Mediterranean were often the first to find migrants aboard boats. Those seeking asylum in Europe received medical care, legal assistance and the chance to participate in programmes run by the Order to facilitate their integration into local communities.

18. The previous week's successful conclusion to the negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was extremely encouraging. It demonstrated the international community's commitment to share strategies for capitalizing on the benefits of migration through the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development, while addressing its driving factors, such as armed conflict and climate change. The Order believed that a paradigm shift with regard to migration was needed, away from discrimination and xenophobia and towards recognition of the human rights, value, and dignity of every refugee. The Order stood ready to play an active role in the adoption of the Compact at the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, to be held in December 2018 in Morocco.

19. **Mr. Menann-Kouame** (Observer for the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions) said that the digital revolution was changing human societies, including ways of behaving, interacting and producing. Above all, it was improving living standards. People everywhere should make the most of the digital revolution to make a qualitative leap toward well-being and a better quality of life. Technological innovations had facilitated access to education, health, and public goods and services; transformative and productive processes had been improved; and information and communications technology (ICT) had narrowed the knowledge gap between individuals at all levels. Those advances made it realistic to hope that the Sustainable Development Goals could be attained.

20. However, that same digital revolution would also bring challenges with it — challenges that would affect the sustainability and resilience of both rural and urban societies. Continuous vigilance would be necessary to ensure that innovations and interconnectivity did not entrench inequality by deepening the digital divide. That said, the United Nations should capitalize on the potential of digital technologies to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. **Ms. Sall-Beye** (International Telecommunication Union (ITU)) said that ICT was crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. ITU applauded countries' efforts to leverage technology to achieve the Goals and reaffirmed its commitment to support countries as they digitalized and implemented new ICT measures in such critical areas as smart cities, health, digital entrepreneurship, digital literacy, e-waste, agriculture and smart governance. Countries were determined to seize the opportunities of the digital revolution, exploring innovations such as the Internet of things. ITU was at the forefront of the revolution; only a few weeks earlier, it had held its second Artificial Intelligence for Good Global Summit in Geneva, which had brought together leading minds from the fields of artificial intelligence and humanitarian action with a view to harnessing artificial intelligence to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

22. Infrastructure was critical to bridging the digital divide, along with innovation, investment and inclusivity. ITU commended countries that had made infrastructure a priority, especially when it benefited those living in rural and remote areas. ITU also congratulated the Secretary-General on the recent launch of the High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, and supported efforts to strengthen international cooperation in the digital space.

23. If not managed properly, the wave of technological change might deepen the divide between the digital "haves" and "have-nots" at a time when over half the world's population was still not using the Internet. Thus, ITU was committed to leaving no one offline and to working with countries and other stakeholders to invest in digital innovation, promote digital inclusion and reach out to youth, women and girls and the most vulnerable.

24. **Mr. Strong** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature) said that nature was fundamental to human well-being and sustainable development. Various nature-based solutions had been proposed over the course of the high-level political forum: conserving wetlands for water security, conserving mangroves and forests to reduce the impact of storm surges and other natural disasters, and establishing protected areas around cities that would provide cost-effective water security solutions and

spaces for recreation, while contributing to climate change regulation.

25. However, nature was under immense pressure, with biodiversity loss occurring at an alarming rate as a result of multiple drivers of species extinction and ecosystem degradation. Losses in biodiversity and land degradation could have major impacts on the health and functioning of ecosystems. The environment must be protected, restored and governed effectively and equitably for people to truly benefit from nature.

26. Immediate action was needed to achieve the targets for protecting the natural world under the 2030 Agenda, many of which were supposed to be achieved by 2020. Conservation worked, but it was not practised consistently or at sufficient scale. It was imperative that the international community adopt the relevant policies, mobilize the needed finances and decide how it would continue its work after 2020. Such planning should take place in conjunction with discussions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to build on synergies. The meetings of the high-level political forum had shown that there was a vast community eager to forge ahead with the transformative agenda, which inspired hope. Protecting nature was possible.

27. **Ms. Nusseibeh** (United Arab Emirates), Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, said that the United Arab Emirates was optimistic, but also concerned, about the results contained in the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64), which pointed to an alarming lack of progress. For example, despite renewable energy having become the cheapest energy source in many countries, some 1 billion people remained without electricity and over 3 billion people were without clean cooking solutions. Poverty eradication and economic growth depended on affordable, reliable energy. Biodiversity and water were also areas of concern. However, it remained unclear what formal action would be taken by Member States or the United Nations.

28. The United Arab Emirates encouraged the United Nations to be more explicit in proposing ways to address gaps in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The high-level political forum should focus on collective responses to those challenges, and the specialized United Nations agencies should articulate strategies to address implementation gaps.

29. The United Arab Emirates was nonetheless encouraged at the repositioning of the United Nations development system, which would help to provide a more coherent response to the findings of the high-level political forum. Empowering resident coordinators to translate the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and national indicators into explicit requests for support from the United Nations system would result in more efficient use of United Nations resources to address national needs. The United Arab Emirates had made a decision early on to provide multi-year funding to support the new resident coordinator system on the ground in yearly amounts of US$ 500,000 until 2030. As a well-funded system was crucial to reforming the United Nations development system, the United Arab Emirates encouraged other potential donors to contribute generously and early to increase the reliability and predictability of the system.

30. The United Arab Emirates welcomed the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation and its focus on public-private partnership. Her country was pleased to see the United Nations expanding into the arena of technological cooperation for development, which could accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

31. **Ms. Cuevas Barron** (Observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) said that multilateralism and cooperation were the most important foundations of the work of IPU, which had 178 members representing 46,000 parliamentarians across the world and believed in democracy and the defence of human rights.

32. IPU was committed to transforming words into action and convinced that transforming the world started at the community level. For that reason, it coordinated closely with the United Nations: it had signed a cooperation agreement with the Organization and worked with national parliaments on the implementation of United Nations resolutions. More than 90 countries had supported the recently adopted General Assembly resolution proclaiming 30 June of each year as the International Day of Parliamentarianism.

33. The work of parliamentarians was fundamental to the advancement of the development agenda. They were responsible for ratifying and adopting development agreements, modifying national laws for the purpose of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, overseeing implementation and ensuring accountability, and formulating budgets to finance achievement of the Goals in the 12 years remaining until 2030. Parliamentarians were the natural link between the international agenda and the citizen's voice. IPU raised awareness and provided information to parliamentarians on the development agenda; recommended implementation strategies; held national, regional and global workshops; and encouraged the exchange of

experiences and best practices. It had generated national assessment mechanisms and had also developed a handbook for parliamentarians wishing to engage in self-assessment.

34. **Mr. Pinheiro** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that ILO had recently redirected its strategic and programmatic orientation towards the 2030 Agenda, including in the global dialogue leading up to its centenary in 2019. The nexus between economic growth, the environment and decent work was a core issue in the implementation of the Agenda and in the future of labour markets.

35. While 1.2 billion jobs — including jobs in farming, fishing and forestry — relied on the effective management and sustainability of a healthy environment, environmental degradation threatened ecosystem services and the jobs that depended on them. The effects were particularly acute for the most vulnerable workers.

36. The transition to a green economy was not only urgent for the sake of the planet but it was also compatible with improvements in decent work. A key finding of a flagship ILO report, *World Economic and Social Outlook*, was that some countries had succeeded in improving labour market outcomes while decoupling growth from carbon emissions. The report showed that tensions between the economy and the environment could be converted into opportunities. An effective transition to a greener economy through appropriate policy choice could generate up to 24 million new jobs. The ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* provided a policy framework and practical tool to help all countries manage the transition to low-carbon economies.

37. **Mr. Tavares** (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)) said that three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, hunger was on the rise and urgent action was needed to reverse that trend. At the same time, obesity and other forms of malnutrition were a growing concern in developed and developing countries. While over 800 million people were undernourished, one third of food produced was wasted or lost, and so were precious natural resources that needed to be sustainably used and managed.

38. Rapid urbanization and growing populations in cities required increased supplies of food, services and social protection. While the urban population was expanding, extreme poverty was concentrated in rural areas where limited access to water, energy, health and education services were affecting women, children and youth in particular. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's poor were rural dwellers. The challenges they faced could not be dealt with in isolation or in opposition to each other. He called for a new rural-urban alliance, with comprehensive interventions to ensure that food systems remained inclusive, resilient and sustainable so as to leave no one behind in either rural or urban areas.

39. Few human activities connected all the dimensions of sustainable development as closely as inclusive and sustainable food systems. They could directly and positively influence the availability of food, the quality of diets, efforts to address poverty, and the creation of decent jobs, contributing to the health, well-being and resilience of rural populations. Transforming food systems was also necessary to ensure that agriculture in its broader sense — from crop production to fisheries — supported the sustainable use and management of natural resources. Sustainable agriculture was critical to increasing efficient water use, protecting and restoring ecosystems and halting biodiversity loss. Sustainable and inclusive food systems could be successful pathways to sustainable development, but only if the 2030 Agenda was holistically advanced.

40. **Mr. El Nour** (International Organization for Migration (IOM)) said that migrants made a positive contribution to the transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. Migration was a human reality of great relevance to development and economic growth.

41. A large number of Member States had already reported on the outcome of their voluntary national reviews. While 43 countries had compiled a report the year before, 47 States had presented reports in 2018, and eight of those covered progress made on specific migration-related issues.

42. The focus of the 2019 high-level political forum would be Goal 10, including target 10.7 on facilitating orderly, safe and regular migration. To that end, IOM encouraged country teams to work through the UNDAF process to prioritize migration. In collaboration with UNDP and the Global Migration Group, it was developing a training manual to help Member States mainstream migration into national development plans. IOM would also work with Member States and regional organizations to integrate migration into regional and South-South cooperation processes. Since, to a large extent, migration took place at the regional level, substantive remittances and other contributions made by migrants to their home countries must be considered in regional development processes. IOM would work with member States to ensure coherence between migration and related policy domains, such as natural disasters and

climate change, which had the potential to set back development gains.

43. Adequate and timely data were of paramount importance. IOM was working with the Economist Intelligence Unit to develop a migration governance indicator, which would provide a comprehensive picture to countries as they managed migration, and with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to help populate indicator 10.7.2 of the Migration Governance Framework on the number of countries having well-managed migration policies.

44. **Mr. Toscano-Rivalia** (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) said that incorporation of disaster risk reduction strategies into national plans was essential for risk-informed sustainable development, and expressed appreciation for countries' efforts in that direction.

45. Target E of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 — namely, to substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 — was critical to achieving the other targets and Sustainable Development Goals. Concerted efforts and international cooperation were needed to meet that target by 2020. Greater focus was also needed to develop strategies to include the voices of women, girls, persons with disabilities, the elderly and youth.

46. Disaster risk reduction must necessarily be incorporated into national financing frameworks and official development assistance (ODA). Disclosure of disaster risk was essential to encourage long-term, risk-informed investment by both the public and private sectors. All stakeholders had a shared responsibility to take action to reduce disaster risk.

47. The 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly would be an important opportunity to assess the extent to which the 17 Goals were being implemented in a risk-informed manner. It would be critical to embed disaster risk reduction in the reviews of the Sustainable Development Goals going forward. Systematically engaging the Sendai Framework focal point in national mechanisms for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including in the voluntary national review process, could provide meaningful input to those deliberations.

48. **Mr. Emtairah** (Director, Department of Energy, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that the Sustainable Development Goals being reviewed in the 2018 high-level political forum were vital for the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development that promoted clean energy solutions and reduced environmental footprints, contributing to the conservation of natural resources and supporting the implementation of Goals 6, 12 and 15. Industries supported by energy-efficient policies, technologies and practices as well as access to affordable and renewable energy would bolster national efforts to follow a low-carbon and low-emission growth pattern to support the implementation of Goal 7. Those efforts could propel smart industries and industrial clusters in urban industrial zones to achieve resource efficiency and develop the required industrial competitiveness for local business markets, supporting the implementation of Goal 11.

49. The 2018 Vienna Energy Forum Special Session, organized with a view to providing further input to the high-level political forum on the review of Goal 7, had identified multiple sustainable development benefits that arose from the three trends emerging out of energy systems transformation: decarbonization, digitization and decentralization. UNIDO had found that the demand to simplify the often complex problems associated with achieving sustainable energy and combating climate changed had opened the space for home-grown innovation and entrepreneurship in clean energy.

50. Drawing on expertise, initiatives and lessons learned in inclusive and sustainable industrial development, UNIDO wished to underscore the role of industrialization in development and poverty reduction. UNIDO, along with its member States and partners, continued to embrace the 2030 Agenda by providing equal opportunities and equitable distribution of the benefits of industrialization to all countries, peoples and segments of society.

51. **Ms. Davtyan** (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)) said that she would focus on the interlinkages between Sustainable Development Goal 11, making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, and the AIDS response.

52. Cities bore a huge proportion of national HIV burdens. HIV prevalence was higher in urban than rural areas; about one quarter of all people living with HIV were residing in about 200 cities. Cities had both a comparative advantage and challenges to address in combating the AIDS epidemic. Large numbers of people could be reached in cities to scale up the response, providing cost-effective health and social services. However, too many urban residents lived in slums, facing poverty, violence and human rights violations as well as economic and social inequality, including lack of access to essential health services, all of which increased exposure and vulnerability to HIV.

53. An effective AIDS response could offer a platform to advance urban development by promoting better health, social inclusion and gender equality. Conversely, safe, healthy and sustainable cities could make a critical contribution to efforts to tackle AIDS. In 2014, the Executive Director of UNAIDS and the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Mayor of Paris and the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care had jointly launched the Paris Declaration on Fast-Track Cities: Ending the Aids Epidemic. Since then, over 250 cities and municipalities had committed to accelerating their AIDS responses and addressing the disparities in access to basic services, social justice and economic opportunity. Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda embraced the commitment of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

54. While the global AIDS response was at a precarious point, with partial success giving way to complacency, immediate action could ensure the achievement of the 2020 targets. UNAIDS called on Member States to accelerate and increase efforts to honour the shared commitment.

55. **Mr. Khiari** (Tunisia), Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations, said that his country had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its own development plan, which covered the period 2016-2020. That development plan, in line with his country's desire to implement Agenda 2063 of the African Union, consisted of five focus areas: good governance, promotion of the national economy, human development and social integration, regional development, and green economy and sustainable development.

56. Tunisia was making every effort to expand water resources, improve the management of running water and dam construction, and promote public-private partnerships to exploit non-traditional resources particularly through the desalination of seawater and salt water from aquifers. It also planned to rehabilitate treatment plants.

57. With regard to Goal 7, Tunisia supported the production of clean energy and initiatives to encourage private investment in that area, the construction of new power plants for electricity production, and the use of natural gas to reduce energy costs.

58. Among the strategies for achieving Goal 11 were a commitment to equitable land use, while respecting ecological balance; the complete integration of urban and rural areas; and the equitable distribution of basic infrastructure, taking into account the need for environmental preservation, climate change adaptation and post-disaster measures.

59. Under Goal 12 on sustainable production and consumption patterns, Tunisia had launched projects to develop renewable energy and environmental and biological technologies. It also attached great importance to creating innovative institutions, and to furthering applied scientific research and the training of engineers in promising fields.

60. In line with Goal 15, Tunisia sought to protect and maintain its natural wealth by addressing the problems of indiscriminate hunting, drought, and excessive exploitation of farmland, and by protecting marine resources and the region's biodiversity.

61. **Ms. Blickley** (International Planned Parenthood Federation), speaking on behalf of the major group for women, said that achieving climate, gender, development and trade justice required global solidarity and actions informed by local needs. Cross-boundary structural issues often had intense impacts on local communities, as the communities were forced to cope and respond with innovative solutions that did not necessarily succeed in addressing the deep and structural roots of the problem. The intersectional nature of the Sustainable Development Goals reflected the complexity of women's realities.

62. The major group for women wished to offer several recommendations. Firstly, actively supporting the meaningful participation of women in decision-making could be possible if Governments created formal opportunities to ensure that the most marginalized groups of women and women most affected by policies and programmes participated in their development. Secondly, investing in the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data would help close the gender data gap and ensure effective budgeting and policymaking. Thirdly, integrating strategies to address gender-discriminatory norms into all policies and programmes of the Sustainable Development Goals would enhance women's ability to participate in public life and achieve equality. That included addressing early and forced marriage, gender-based violence and power dynamics that held women and girls back, as well as the stigmas surrounding both menstrual health and women's roles in the sustainable energy sector.

63. The major group also wished to stress the importance of valuing, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care work. Gender-responsive infrastructure, social protection programmes and care services would reduce the disproportionate domestic burden on women and girls that interfered with their education and employment prospects. Also,

gender-responsive budgeting would allow Governments to analyse the gender-differentiated impacts of budgets and allocate funds to achieving gender equality targets. Moreover, protecting women's rights to own and control land and property, energy and other productive resources by eliminating discriminatory laws and putting in place proactive policies was of paramount importance. In conclusion, she called for accountability from the local to the global level, bolstered by input from women's and feminist groups and rigorous and transparent reviews, including in the high-level political forum.

64. **Mr. Bojanic** (European Youth Forum), speaking on behalf of the major group for children and youth, said that the meaningful inclusion and participation of children and young people were necessary both for building sustainable and resilient societies, and for the success of the 2030 Agenda. Children and young people were vital agents of change; their ability to have their views heard, engage in civic action, and participate in public decision-making must be protected, especially in the cases of those who were most marginalized and deprived.

65. Societies might be more ready to respond effectively to change if they took into consideration the ideas and contributions of children and young people with regard to sustainable development and paid greater heed to evidence and data on what actually worked and how it affected different groups of people. Unsustainable practices were putting the future of children and young people in jeopardy. The misguided assumption that economic growth produced benefits for all must give way to a system that had the well-being of people and planet — and a different understanding of progress — at its core. Anti-collectivism, the backlash against multilateralism, and backtracking on human rights were undermining efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Local ownership and capacity were needed to build sustainability and resilience, but international momentum and responsibility must not waver.

66. **Mr. Vázquez Alarcón** (Observer for the International Federation for Family Development) said that his organization was leading the Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families Project in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda to combat the challenges that the expected increase in the world's urban population — (from 55 per cent in 2018 to 60 per cent in 2030) — would pose. Two focus group meetings held in Italy and Brazil had brought together experts, policymakers and civil society members to determine how modern cities could be resilient and provide services to families.

67. City designs should take into account all families and social groups, incorporate flexible urban and environmentally sustainable planning, and ensure that social services were readily available to all. They should emphasize access to housing, including intergenerational arrangements to provide care for the elderly and affordable housing for youth. Closer linkages between new technologies and social inclusion — for example, through training for older persons — could help to bridge the digital gap. Accessible and affordable childcare facilities close to the parents' residence or workplace, parenting and intergenerational education, other programmes to address the needs of vulnerable families (including single-parent, large, and migrant families), and a welcoming environment on city streets would be equally important. Such efforts would ensure the safe growth of all family members and of the society as a whole.

68. **Mr. Carvalho** (WaterAid), speaking on behalf of the major group for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), said that the world was not on track to achieve the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Increasing inequality, the lack of a sense of urgency, and diminishing accountability all pointed to the need for immediate reorientation and restructuring towards equity, human rights and justice. In spite of the 191 Member States which had voted in favour of the ministerial declaration, the proceedings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development had revealed a continuing lack of commitment and insufficient leadership in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

69. Unlike the Human Rights Council, the high-level political forum could not mandate parallel or shadow reports on country-level implementation; that should be taken into account in the 2019 review of forum modalities. He welcomed the initiative to pre-approve one side event by each major group and stakeholder group during the 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum. It was regrettable that during the current high-level political forum, civil society had been granted only 20 per cent of the time allotted to official side events, while an entire day had been dedicated to a closed business forum. There had been fewer opportunities for major and stakeholder groups to intervene, especially in the meetings on voluntary national reviews: one two-minute statement had clearly not been sufficient to represent them all. The current platform was proving insufficient for meaningful and constructive dialogue, with presenters being given inadequate amounts of time to properly express their concerns.

70. The high-level political forum must lead by example. It must create the conditions for meaningful and constructive dialogue and serve as a true platform for learning and accountability. The major group for NGOs looked forward to the meeting of the Heads of State in 2019 at the opening of the review of the modalities of the high-level political forum; at the same time, it was deeply concerned that the forum was not living up to expectations regarding its role in either monitoring and review or addressing the crisis of the larger global structures in which it attempted to intervene. The major group for NGOs rededicated itself to ensuring that justice spoke louder than entrenched power and hoped its energy and commitment would counteract the forces of complacency that had set into the multilateral system. In conclusion, he called on Governments to use the high-level political forum to meaningfully advance the 2030 Agenda through leadership and political guidance. Political, economic, social and environmental paradigms must shift towards human rights and dignity for all.

71. **The President** said that the concerns expressed by the representative of the major group for non-governmental organizations had been noted and would be duly addressed.

72. **Mr. Parmegiani** (Observer for the Legião da Boa Vontade) said that it was crucial to recognize the importance of civil society and the grass-roots movement in the intergovernmental process. His organization was dedicated to combating all forms of poverty through a network of 95 education centres across seven countries: Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Portugal and the United States of America. Through educational and social programmes aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, and with the help of the very communities it served, the Legião da Boa Vontade had impacted more than 600,000 vulnerable people in 2017 alone. That large-scale mobilization of solidarity in action had demonstrated the power of people to respond to global challenges when given the right opportunity.

73. Resilience and sustainability would come about through re-education and the promotion of holistic human development for a more solidary, altruistic and ecumenical society. His organization's bottom-up approach was a bold and concrete alternative strategy towards achieving the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda. Moral and spiritual development was as important as economic and social policy or technological progress, and could act as a means to eliminate inequality, violence, and indifference.

74. **Mr. Jensen**, (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that he, Mr. Elzinga and Mr. Ashenaft would be speaking on behalf of mountain communities and wished to thank the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences for providing them that opportunity. He noted that climate change and migration had aggravated the situation of mountain communities, already among the poorest and most neglected communities in the world. According to a recent joint study by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Mountain Partnership Secretariat, an estimated 39 per cent of the mountain population in developing countries was vulnerable to food insecurity. From 2000 to 2012, there had been a 30 per cent increase in the number of mountain people vulnerable to food insecurity, while their population had increased by only 16 per cent.

75. **Mr. Elzinga** (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that targets under Sustainable Development Goals 6 and 15 — namely, targets 6.6, 15.1 and 15.4 — must be addressed to ensure the well-being of mountain populations. Since 2007, Utah Valley University, with the support of the Mountain Partnership, had involved students in activities to achieve mountain targets. The Utah International Mountain Forum, (a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University), had addressed a number of real-world problems facing mountain communities.

76. **Mr. Ashenaft** (Observer for the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences) said that the Utah International Mountain Forum had advocated for mountain women during the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and had reported on jointly hosting the International Women of the Mountains Conferences with their Kyrgyz peers, in implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/24 entitled "International Year of Mountains, 2002". The Forum's recommendations regarding the crucial role women played in the implementation of two mountain targets were included in the 2016 report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development (A/71/256). The students had raised and contributed $250,000 to achievement of the mountain targets. The Utah International Mountain Forum model demonstrated that students could and must play an active role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. That model could be used by universities in rural and mountainous areas worldwide to provide similar benefits to students, and to transform mountain communities towards sustainable and resilient societies.

77. **Ms. Jappie** (Observer for the International Trade Centre (ITC)) said that her organization was the joint

development agency of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations, through the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Using the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals as a basic framework, it worked with partners to help micro-, small, and medium-sized companies in developing countries to become more competitive in international markets. International trade was highlighted in both the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development as a crucial catalyst for inclusive growth, job creation, and poverty reduction, and as an important contribution to sustainable development.

78. Despite those advantages, trade had come to be depicted as an unwelcome constraint on national sovereignty and a zero-sum game. The solution to rectifying trade imbalances was not to abandon multilateral cooperation but rather to make it more transparent, inclusive, and efficient, so that it could work for the 99 per cent. To that end, ITC focused particular attention on the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, sub-Saharan African countries and post-conflict countries in providing support to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those that employed vulnerable populations such as women and youth. Focusing on 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production, the International Trade Centre worked to develop trade for sustainable development, with the aim of helping businesses see their position in the value chain and become more sustainable. Her organization, along with a trade hub of multilateral organizations in Geneva and its parent organizations, UNCTAD and WTO, would be making every effort to harness the power of trade for the 2030 Agenda.

79. **Mr. Joshi** (Observer for Vaagdhara) said that changing socioeconomic, political, and climatic conditions had left the once thriving indigenous communities in the western part of India vulnerable and economically deprived. Farming had become a non-viable occupation, owing to increased input costs, harsh climatic conditions and loss of traditional knowledge of low-cost high-nutrition farming.

80. To ensure the sovereignty and security of the Indian indigenous community and maintain its identity and dignity, he urged the promotion of eco-friendly and sustainable farming practices which embraced traditional knowledge and wisdom and were aimed at curbing or ending the use of chemical fertilizers, while promoting soil conservation. In addition, every child must have opportunities for growth and development through education, child labour must be eradicated and urban migration must be checked. Optimal utilization of budgetary allocations for tribal development would be crucial to those ends; in that connection, government offices should be held accountable for any inappropriate spending.

81. **Mr. Borrero** (International Indian Treaty Council), speaking on behalf of the major group for indigenous peoples, said that with 80 per cent of the world's remaining biodiversity situated in the territories of indigenous communities, the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples was recognized as critical to combating the global climate crisis. Indigenous peoples, who made up 15 per cent of the world's extreme poor but only 5 per cent of its population, were often linked to sustainability and had much to share and contribute at the global, national and local levels.

82. The resilience of indigenous peoples had its roots in generations of observation and their respectful relationship with their lands, territories and resources, as well as their sheer will to survive after enduring long-term intergenerational violations of their most basic human rights by external forces that coveted those same lands, territories and resources. Climate change and economic globalization placed additional pressures on indigenous peoples, especially the effects of resource-intensive and extractive industries, which, in many cases, led to large-scale displacement, loss of livelihood and food insecurity.

83. States must fulfil their obligation to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, including their right to self-determination as set forth in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. Those rights should not be negatively affected by broader development processes; development projects must not be launched without the informed and prior consent of indigenous peoples or ensuring that the benefits of development efforts would be equitably distributed and target the reduction of inequality. The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals should be monitored through the collection of disaggregated data and in collaboration with indigenous peoples. He wished to emphasize that the resilience of indigenous peoples did not absolve States from the solemn commitment to respect their rights and freedoms, given that the universal nature of those rights and freedoms was beyond question.

84. **Ms. Craviotto** (International Trade Union Confederation), speaking on behalf of the major group

for workers and trade unions, said that eradicating poverty, addressing climate change, ensuring decent work and quality education, reducing inequalities, and building peaceful and inclusive societies for all were among the remaining challenges to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development had revealed that action, ambition and public financing had thus far been insufficient to overcome those obstacles.

85. The major group for workers and trade unions called for a just transition, a fast and fair transformation towards environmentally sustainable and socially responsible societies, and social dialogue between communities, Governments, workers and employers to create local ownership around that transition, build consensus and inclusion, facilitate policy implementation and strengthen democratic processes. Such a transition must ensure that no one was left behind in efforts to reduce emissions, protect the climate and advance social and economic justice. Gender-responsive and universally accessible free public education and health and social services were vital to sustainable economic and social development, and to combating poverty and inequalities.

86. Significant investments in infrastructure would be needed to implement the Goals. The major group for workers and trade unions believed that public investment would be best suited for that purpose and was concerned at the increasing privatization of public services, including through public-private partnerships, which could undermine quality, equity and human rights, as well as incur additional costs in the long run. She therefore called for government support of regulatory and policy frameworks, including due diligence, enabling the private sector to contribute to the realization of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

87. **Mr. Vachon** (World Federation of Engineering Organizations), speaking on behalf of the major group for the scientific and technological community, said that science and engineering played an important role in establishing sustainable and resilient societies. The science-policy interface was vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the rising population in urban environments, particularly in Asia and Africa, and the relative lack of industrialization in those regions, the United Nations should encourage standards-based frameworks to ensure development that aligned infrastructure services with urban planning.

88. The United Nations should encourage Member States to invest in international cooperation in science, technology and engineering, as they were key to building sustainable and resilient societies, especially in the least developed countries. It should also encourage support for the major group's activities to promote international cooperation in science, technology and engineering with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Technical, institutional and community capacity-building should be expanded; to that end, one aim of the World Federation's Plan 2030 was to scale up efforts to strengthen engineering education and capacity-building worldwide.

89. Engineering and science practice should be transformed to address all aspects of sustainability. In that connection, the United Nations should encourage the broad adoption of the World Federation's Model Code of Practice for Sustainable Development. Given the interconnectedness of the Goals, scientists and engineers would have to acknowledge diversity across disciplines and the intellectual traditions of different geographical regions. Recognizing the complexity of advancing the ambitious 2030 Agenda, the major group for the scientific and technological community was committed to supporting evidence-based prioritization and innovation to that end. Full life-cycle costing was vital to ensuring sustainable infrastructure services and should be encouraged by the United Nations at all scales.

90. **Mr. Griffith** (Griffith Foods), speaking on behalf of the major group for business and industry, said that business reaffirmed and recognized its responsibility and support for the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the inclusive involvement of representative business and industry organizations.

91. In the presentations of voluntary national reviews, reporting on the role of business had intensified. The business community was tremendously encouraged by the number of Member States which had mentioned the importance of engaging with businesses at the global, national and local levels to ensure the success of the 2030 Agenda.

92. Companies and business associations participated and invested in efforts to end poverty, advance sustainability and encourage prosperity to achieve the Goals despite increased uncertainty owing to rising tariffs. The major group for business and industry encouraged respect for a rules-based trading system and stressed the importance of the World Trade Organization and the multilateral system. Business and industry played an important role in leaving no one behind in the transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies. In conclusion, he said that businesses were in

a unique position to create positive solutions that drove sustainable profits through sustainable practices.

93. **Mr. Riley** (Global Ageing Network), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group on ageing, said that both developed and developing societies worldwide were experiencing an unprecedented ageing megatrend. If advancement towards the Sustainable Development Goals were underpinned by attention to older persons and the protection of their human rights, all cohorts of society would benefit.

94. The challenges, risks and problems addressed by the Sustainable Development Goals were magnified for older persons across urban and rural settings. Older persons experienced complex forms of exclusion and marginalization based on a wide variety of factors, including socially ingrained ageism compounded by gender, ethnicity and other biases. Older persons did not have equal access to adequate housing, public services and other resources, which constituted a violation of their human rights. The quest to leave no one behind must mean inclusion for all people of all ages throughout their life course.

95. Older persons worldwide should be recognized as an underpinning pillar of the planning and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The stakeholder group on ageing called for the full participation of older persons in the planning and design of initiatives to achieve the Goals; mechanisms to foster the independence and prospering of older persons, including access to preventative health care and other quality services; and a commitment that all activities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would seek to protect older persons from neglect and discrimination.

96. **Mr. Moe** (Volunteer Groups Alliance), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group for volunteers, said that volunteer labour, with a billion participants worldwide, was not motivated by compensation and therefore was the most valuable type of labour. Volunteers were not motivated by money, but rather by an understanding that the cost of doing nothing would be too expensive in the long run.

97. Disaster response was an indicator of how strong and resilient communities could be, for example, in situations where volunteers were the first to respond and stayed the longest to rebuild. The best way to ensure that volunteers responded effectively was for Governments to create a supportive environment and a culture of volunteerism before disaster struck. The year before, a massive volunteer effort in India had typified how, with the appropriate time, energy, coordination and resources, volunteers had combated deforestation and addressed Sustainable Development Goal 15.

98. Admittedly, volunteers were not the sole solution to the world's most pressing problems and, though volunteerism was a worldwide phenomenon, participation and effectiveness varied. Volunteerism thrived when it was politically and financially supported by legislation, policies, and partnerships — and when it was measured, recognized and encouraged.

99. He urged countries to establish or enhance programmes, laws, schemes, policies and campaigns that encouraged volunteerism; measure and communicate volunteer contributions to attainment of the Goals; and engage volunteers and civil society as partners in collecting and analysing data on the Sustainable Development Goals.

100. **Mr. Lappalainen** (Finnish Non-Governmental Development Organization (NGDO) Platform to the European Union (KEHYS)), speaking on behalf of the stakeholder group for education and academia, said that education and lifelong learning played a major role in the transformative agenda for more environmentally sustainable societies, and were crucial to achieving the Goals under review in the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

101. The biggest challenge in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 was financing. Domestic budgets remained insufficient, ODA had decreased, and proposals to close the financing gap, through loans would lead to debt. Lack of resource allocation had given rise to increasing privatization in some countries, with reports of for-profit actors taking advantage of gaps in public provision, undermining the responsibility of Governments to advance the 2030 Agenda.

102. Problems related to education policy included insufficient attention to gender equality and the status of teachers; neglect of youth and adult education; and the persistence of violence, conflict and emergency situations. In order to contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, education and lifelong learning should be regarded as a human right, and should be of good quality, equitable, inclusive, free and accessible for all. Support for education and lifelong learning would enhance the linkage between the three dimensions of sustainable development; in addition, human rights, sustainable development and global citizenship should be mainstreamed across curricula.

103. **Ms. De Guzman** (Foundation for Environmental Stewardship), speaking on behalf of the Sendai stakeholders group, said that the group represented a broad and diverse swath of society — urban and rural

communities, professionals and those living in poverty, and representatives of Government and civil society — united in their commitment to disaster risk reduction. In that context, local communities and civil society should explore all possible mechanisms to give voice to their needs and build partnerships. Working with local and subnational governments to establish political will was vital to institutionalizing a commitment to those new development practices. Ensuring that no one was left behind called for a people-centred approach that was empowering, drove resources, built capacity and supported communities where action was most urgently needed.

104. The stakeholder group encouraged countries to reinforce the urgency and instrumentality of risk-informed development; raise awareness about the impact and feasibility of engaging all stakeholders in the sustainable development agenda process; make use of science, technologies, indigenous and local knowledge; and promote accountability in the national delivery of global agreements.

105. The Sendai stakeholders group was ready to collect data on disaster risk and ensure that it would be accessible to all; build local actors' resilience capacity by educating youth, particularly girls, and training them to become agents of change and leaders in building resilience; and devolve financial and technical resources to the local level and invest in integrated community-led resilience action.

106. As the 2020 target for increasing the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies drew near, Governments were urged to engage all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring processes.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

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Fourth coordination and management meeting

Summary record of the 50th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 24 July 2018, at 10 a.m.

President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(e) African countries emerging from conflict (E/2018/70; E/2018/L.24)

1. **Mr. Jinga** (Romania), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, said that in General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, States had reaffirmed the Commission's main purpose as an intergovernmental advisory body and had stressed that it should serve a bridging role among the principal organs of the United Nations. That function was particularly relevant to the present discussion.

2. Although the Commission considered situations in many parts of the world, Africa was its main focus and the Sahel remained a clear priority. The Security Council had emphasized the importance of the Commission's convening role in mobilizing deeper commitment and partnership between the United Nations, the countries of the Sahel and other international and regional partners, with a view to advancing implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel in collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. The case of the Sahel provided an interesting example of collaboration between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council. At a joint meeting held in June 2017, the two bodies had examined ways to overcome the multidimensional challenges facing the Sahel region by addressing the social, economic and environmental causes of the crisis.

3. To enhance synergies in the region, the Commission's session in 2018 would focus exclusively on the Sahel. Member States, representatives of countries in the Sahel, senior United Nations officials and representatives of international and civil society organizations would discuss how to mobilize deeper commitments and partnerships in support of efforts to build and sustain peace in the Sahel, under the umbrella of the United Nations integrated strategy.

4. A number of lessons and good practices had emerged from the Commission's recent work. First, national ownership and leadership in peacebuilding efforts was essential to success. Governments bore primary responsibility for setting priorities and implementing strategies, while the responsibility for sustaining peace was broadly shared by all national stakeholders, as had been confirmed when the Commission had discussed peacebuilding in Colombia. Senior representatives of the Government of Colombia, together with civil society representatives, had highlighted the success of the peace process in that country. Key factors had been the strong national ownership of the process and the existence of robust and democratic institutions.

5. Second, current challenges were often cross-border in nature, since a situation in one country could have implications for others in the same region. The capacity of the United Nations to respond to those challenges must be enhanced in a coherent and strategic manner and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations was therefore important. That matter had been discussed at length during the recent joint meeting of the Commission and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

6. Third, the economic and social dimensions of peacebuilding must not be neglected and the Commission was uniquely positioned to provide broad, diverse, long-term and coherent peacebuilding perspectives thanks to its convening and bridging role. He had raised that point in a recent informal interactive dialogue with the Security Council, which had explored practical ways to enhance the advisory role of the Commission during the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Some of the elements that had emerged were that: (a) the added value and relevance of the Commission's advice lay in its capacity to bring to the attention of the Security Council the perspectives and priorities of host countries, as well as a longer-term, more holistic approach to discussions on the multidimensional nature of peacebuilding and to addressing the root causes of conflicts; (b) the Commission was expected to complement the information contained in the reports of the Secretary-General by sharing its peacebuilding perspectives when the Security Council was considering the formation, review and drawdown of missions in countries under the consideration of both bodies; and (c) as underscored by the situation in the Sudan and the experience of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the root causes of conflict must be tackled and peacebuilding efforts should not wait until mission withdrawal began.

7. The perspective of the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social challenges of peacebuilding should also be an important element of the Commission's advice to the Security Council. He encouraged the seven members of the Economic and

Social Council that were also members of the Peacebuilding Commission to play a leading role in fostering closer cooperation between the two bodies. As one of those seven members, Romania would do its part.

8. Gender was an important dimension of peacebuilding. The Commission had adopted an internal gender strategy in 2016 and the Peacebuilding Fund had exceeded its own target of allocating 15 per cent of its funds to gender-focused programmes.

9. The Commission stood ready to continue its collaboration with the Economic and Social Council, with a view to discussing ways to support conflict-affected countries and to enhance coherence in the United Nations system.

10. **Mr. Khan** (United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator ad interim and World Food Programme Country Representative for South Sudan), speaking via video link from Juba and introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system (E/2018/70), said that maintaining a ceasefire remained a challenge in South Sudan. Fighting and violence continued in many parts of the country and had become increasingly fragmented and localized. In June 2017, the leaders of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had endorsed the establishment of the High-level Revitalization Forum to reinvigorate the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (Peace Agreement). Subsequently, the parties had signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access, which committed them to ceasing all hostilities and revitalizing the implementation of the Peace Agreement. An agreement on the outstanding issues relating to security and governance was being negotiated in Khartoum.

11. The crisis in South Sudan had continued to worsen and required a massive, and growing, humanitarian operation. The region was hosting more than 2.5 million South Sudanese refugees and 1.8 million people were internally displaced. Protection threats were intensifying in scale and in scope, and the population continued to be exposed to violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

12. The economic situation remained challenging. Government spending for the 2018/19 financial year was estimated at only $268 million, which was around one tenth of the pre-independence figure. The national currency had continued to depreciate against the United States dollar owing to high levels of central bank borrowing, and April 2018 was the twenty-ninth month of triple-digit year-on-year inflation.

13. By the end of April 2018, some 7 million people had been at risk of hunger without sustained humanitarian assistance and access. In 2016, the under-5 mortality rate had been estimated at 91 per 1,000 live births, and the situation had since deteriorated. However, the longest cholera outbreak ever recorded in South Sudan had finally been declared over in February 2018, thanks to collaboration to enhance response and surveillance and deploy rapid response teams.

14. The United Nations country team and its partners had renewed efforts to strengthen support for recovery and resilience, with a growing focus on supporting local peacebuilding to mitigate increasingly localized conflicts, and with investment from the Peacebuilding Fund.

15. The United Nations had supported the Government in developing guidelines for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into national sustainable development plans and finalizing the national disaster risk management policy. Support had also been provided to kick-start implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The Government had finalized its three-year national development strategy and the recently presented national budget would be the first to support the implementation of the national development strategy.

16. United Nations support for peacebuilding, recovery and development was guided by the recently endorsed United Nations cooperation framework for the 2019–2021 period, which would shortly be signed by the Minister for Finance and Planning, the resident coordinator and the heads of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The implementation of the framework would result in a new way of working to ensure greater synergies between humanitarian and development actors.

17. The United Nations country team would also further strengthen cooperation with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) through joint programmes and other joint activities, as well as with other actors with political, security and peacebuilding mandates.

Draft decision E/2018/L.24: African countries emerging from conflict

18. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications. The phrase "a report on

the subject" in the third line should be replaced with "an oral report on the subject".

19. *Draft decision E/2018/L.24, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

(d) Long-term programme of support for Haiti (E/2018/75; E/2018/L.18)

20. **Mr. Blanchard** (Canada), Chair of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, introduced the draft resolution contained in document E/2018/L.18, in which the Council would welcome the annual report of the Advisory Group, contained in document E/2018/75, and the recommendations contained therein, and would decide to extend the mandate of the Advisory Group for another year.

21. Introducing the report of the Advisory Group, he said that during its visits to Washington, D.C. and Haiti, the Group had witnessed major efforts by Haitians to guarantee their country's future development and prosperity. More than a year after the elections and the installation of a new Government, important milestones had been reached in the country's efforts to make sustainable progress in its development. Haiti had an opportunity to undertake a real transition, as a result of which it would cease to be a recipient of humanitarian aid and would embark on a path of sustainable development. However, the situation remained fragile and the country continued to face a host of challenges that affected its socioeconomic development. The population was calling for immediate improvements in its quality of life. The Government should respond to those expectations quickly and effectively, with support from the United Nations and the international community. There was an urgent need for increased alignment of actions to ensure the delivery of immediate results to the people of Haiti.

22. The Group's recommendations included encouraging the Government to take the leading role in national development and to carry out urgent reforms in critical sectors, including justice, in order to strengthen governance institutions. The international community should ensure that it provided more stable and predictable financing to Haiti. It should also make sure that its efforts were coordinated and that international aid was aligned with national Government priorities, as underlined by the Haitian authorities themselves. Lastly, the Group encouraged the United Nations to improve its coordination and consultation with the Government, especially in consideration of the two-year exit strategy of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). The country team should have the required resources and must be prepared for the departure of MINUJUSTH.

23. During its visit to Haiti, the Advisory Group had observed several community projects established by the United Nations team to combat the spread of cholera. It had been particularly impressed by the consultative and participatory approach developed by the United Nations country team as a whole to ensure the success of those projects and their ownership by the local communities, and it commended the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti for her leadership and commitment. Even though statistics showed the success of the new approach, the international community should continue to finance anti-cholera measures in Haiti with a view to eliminating the disease.

24. In order to be successful, the MINUJUSTH progressive exit strategy must be implemented in a responsible, planned manner, in close collaboration with the country team, the Government of Haiti and the international community. Sustainable economic development remained crucial for the prosperity and stability of Haiti. More needed to be done to unleash and maximize the country's immense economic potential in order to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

25. **Mr. Tran Ba Huy** (United Nations Resident Coordinator ad interim and World Food Programme (WFP) Representative in Haiti), speaking via video link from Port-au-Prince to brief the Council on the situation in Haiti, said that violent demonstrations had broken out from 6 to 8 July 2018, in response to the Government's decision to reduce fuel subsidies. Those events had paralyzed the capital and led to the Government's subsequent reversal of the decision. In an address to the nation on 14 July 2018, the President, Jovenel Moïse, had confirmed that he had accepted the resignation of the Prime Minister, Jack Guy Lafontant, and his Government. President Moïse had also expressed his commitment to consultation with all sectors in order to form an inclusive government with a mission to fight poverty and develop agriculture, energy and infrastructure in Haiti.

26. With regard to the national economy, a significant fiscal deficit was forecast for 2018, despite the Government's efforts, and resource mobilization remained a challenge, with internal revenues reaching only 12.9 per cent of gross domestic product. As of December 2017, external debt stood at $2.6 billion, the majority of which was owed to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela under the PetroCaribe programme. Notwithstanding, planned government investment in the

agricultural sector and normal rainfall during the fourth quarter of 2017 had led to increased agricultural output.

27. In terms of regional integration, President Moïse's advocacy during his tenure as Chair of the Caribbean Community had resulted in an agreement to convene a special session on the free movement of people, goods, services and capital throughout the region. Furthermore, in a recent meeting with the Comité d'efficacité de l'aide to strengthen aid coordination, President Moïse had called for greater alignment of external cooperation with government priorities and national systems. The Government and its partners had undertaken to revitalize three pilot thematic and sectoral bodies, including on the rule of law, and to establish a dialogue mechanism on the legislative agenda and a joint committee to prepare a draft law on aid cooperation and governance.

28. Through activities including a Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support mission deployed in January 2018, the United Nations continued to support the Government's efforts to define national priorities and incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning processes and policies. The mission report had been shared with the Government and would help to guide the process going forward. Moreover, the transition to a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence in Haiti would be a defining moment for the country's development and stability. The Security Council, in its resolution 2410 (2018), by means of which it had renewed the mandate of MINUJUSTH for one year, had established significant transition planning and reporting requirements. The members of the Secretary-General's Executive Committee had identified the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as the main programmatic planning tool to ensure an integrated approach to the MINUJUSTH transition. In that respect, MINUJUSTH-mandated areas and priorities had been included in the joint work plan on governance, as part of the UNDAF annual implementation review, and inter-agency working groups would carry out quarterly reviews of the results achieved. The senior management of MINUJUSTH and the United Nations country team would continue to assess progress in implementing the UNDAF and would identify bottlenecks before engaging with the Government and with national and international actors. In addition, a security transition plan was being developed to consider the operational support currently provided by the police component of MINUJUSTH.

29. The humanitarian community continued to help build State disaster preparedness capacity through the provision of support to the Directorate of Civil Protection. Collaborative efforts between the Haitian authorities and international partners to defeat cholera had resulted in the continuation of the downward trend in the disease first observed in late 2016. If that trend were maintained through the cyclone season, it would represent a further step toward zero-transmission.

30. The key to sustainable improvement of the social and economic situation in Haiti was good governance and increased capacity of national institutions to develop public policies on domestic resource mobilization, border control and various other areas of national development. The international community could contribute by building the capacity of national institutions and systems and ultimately allowing official development assistance to be channelled through them. Finally, in order to ensure a successful transition, a resource mobilization strategy prioritizing funding approaches that strengthened national capacities was being prepared.

31. **Mr. Regis** (Observer for Haiti), recalling that Haiti had been the first State to receive a United Nations technical assistance mission, in 1948, said that many of the conclusions and recommendations of that initial mission, such as the need for agricultural development, remained absolute priorities for Haiti.

32. The Advisory Group had always taken its mandate seriously and, since its reactivation in 2004, had focused on social and political stability and security, consolidation of the rule of law, protection of human rights and the establishment of the conditions for sustainable development. However, public investments, particularly in essential infrastructure such as water, electricity, health care and education, had not yet recovered strongly, and growth remained low. That situation affected the most vulnerable population groups, while the stagnation in poverty levels exacerbated the risks of long-term instability, as evidenced in the unfortunate events of 6 to 8 July 2018.

33. The Advisory Group could contribute powerfully to the creation of a new partnership framework which would permit the country to catch up, substantially increase national production, build key public infrastructure, increase its capacity to attract foreign investment, and support entrepreneurship, thereby providing the Haitian people with fresh prospects of improving their living conditions. While the development of Haiti could be achieved only by Haitians themselves, the support of the international community, taking into consideration the priorities and programmes developed by the Government, remained crucial for the achievement of the national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. In conclusion, he welcomed the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (E/2018/75). In particular, he noted the call for more effective coordination between the Government and the United Nations system on the ground to ensure better alignment of aid with national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda, so as to reinforce mutual responsibility. Such alignment would also provide new sources of financing for anti-cholera measures and necessary institutional reforms. He urged the Advisory Group to strengthen its advocacy with bilateral and multilateral partners of Haiti in order to ensure that international cooperation in the area of sustainable development was adequate, coherent, well coordinated and effective, constituting part of a real drive towards the development of the country's capacities in key sectors.

35. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that, as a member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, his delegation had participated in the recent visit to Haiti. The clear commitment of the Haitian Government to achieving progress in the social, political, economic and environmental areas should be based on a long-term vision and strategic framework to ensure alignment of its efforts with the relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda, in keeping with national priorities. In addition, continued support for MINUJUSTH and the United Nations team in Haiti was essential for the alignment of their work with the country's development priorities. He commended the member States of the United Nations for their efforts to maintain the budget of MINUJUSTH, pursuant to the mandates established by the Security Council to prioritize the police and justice sectors.

36. El Salvador would continue to support Haiti both through the Group of Friends of Haiti and bilaterally, specifically in cooperation with the Haitian police. The international community should continue to assist the country in its efforts to achieve sustainable development and build resilience.

Draft resolution E/2018/L.18: Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

37. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors. Colombia, El Salvador, France, Rwanda and Senegal also wished to become sponsors.

38. Delivering a statement of programme budget implications in accordance with rule 31 of the Council's rules of procedure, she said that, should the draft resolution be adopted, it was estimated that the support to be provided to the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would consist of: (a) travel for members of the Group and up to two staff members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to meet with the international financial institutions and the Organization of American States in 2019 and undertake a mission to Haiti in the same year, and (b) meeting support services in Haiti.

39. The total resource requirements for the consultative missions to Haiti and Washington, D.C. in 2019 were estimated at $39,200, for which provision had not been made in the programme budget for 2018–2019. It was, however, expected that those requirements would be met within the resources approved under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

40. With respect to paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, in which the Secretary-General was requested to continue to support the activities of the Group adequately and within existing resources, the Council's attention was drawn to the provisions of section VI of General Assembly resolution 45/248 B and subsequent resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 72/261, in which the Assembly had reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters and had also reaffirmed the mandates of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

41. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.18 was adopted.*

Agenda item 14: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (*continued*) (A/73/84-E/2018/72)

Agenda item 16: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan
(A/73/87-E/2018/69; E/2018/L.19 and E/2018/L.27)

42. **Mr. Alami** (Director, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Section, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/73/87-E/2018/69), said that Palestinians continued to experience Israeli discriminatory policies and practices, including the

application of two legal systems, which granted more rights to Israelis than to Palestinians, and discriminatory planning and zoning policies that de facto prevented Palestinians in Area C and East Jerusalem from building or undertaking development.

43. The Israeli army and security forces, in violation of international law, had continued to use excessive force, including unlawful killings, and Palestinians had suffered a sharp increase in attacks and harassment from Israeli settlers, with almost no accountability. Large numbers of Palestinians, including children, were being held in Israeli prisons, some of them in indefinite administrative detention. Since 2013, complaints about the torture and ill treatment of Palestinian prisoners by Israeli security services had quadrupled.

44. Since 2009, thousands of people had been displaced owing to the demolitions of Palestinian homes and other structures by Israelis, contributing to the coercive environment in the West Bank. Israeli authorities cited the lack of building permits as a reason to demolish Palestinian homes, though such permits were nearly impossible to obtain. Israel also used demolitions and the confiscation of property as a punitive measure against the families and neighbours of Palestinians suspected of carrying out attacks. Such acts could amount to collective punishment, which was prohibited by international law. Those measures, combined with other practices, had also led to what might amount to the forcible transfer of Palestinians, a grave breach of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War that constituted a war crime. In March 2018, the Knesset had passed a new law allowing the Interior Minister to revoke the permanent residency of Palestinians in East Jerusalem if they had committed, inter alia, any "acts that constituted breach of trust against the State of Israel".

45. Israeli settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory violated international law and was a major obstacle to peace. Israeli policies also encouraged population growth among the settlers, resulting in a growth rate that surpassed that of both the overall population of Israel and the Palestinian population in the West Bank. In May 2017, Israeli authorities had approved the establishment of a new settlement in Area C for the first time since 1992. In February 2017, the Knesset had adopted a law extending its jurisdiction to matters concerning the private property of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

46. The blockade affecting 2 million Palestinian people in Gaza amounted to collective punishment, undermining their rights and affecting the conditions in which they lived. Requirements for the entry of raw materials and the travel of traders and merchants had hindered reconstruction and development projects and programmes in Gaza. In 2017, exits through the Erez crossing had fallen by almost 50 per cent compared with the previous year and the number of valid permits issued to traders had drastically dropped between 2015 and 2017. The approval rate for medical patients allowed through the Erez crossing had also fallen by almost half between 2012 and 2017.

47. The Israeli army had enforced access-restricted areas along the Gaza border fence and at sea, undermining the right of Palestinian farmers and fishermen to a livelihood. In the West Bank, the construction of the wall, and other constraints on the movement of Palestinians, undermined economic activity and access to basic services. By the end of January 2017, 60 km of roads in the West Bank had been designated for exclusive or near-exclusive use by Israelis, while 17.5 per cent of the West Bank was covered by Israeli firing zones and was off limits to Palestinians.

48. Israeli policies restricting the repair, rehabilitation and construction of basic water infrastructure in the West Bank resulted in a lack of access to water. In Area C, 95,000 Palestinians received less than 50 litres of water per capita per day, which was half of the minimum recommended by the World Health Organization. Forty per cent of Palestinians in East Jerusalem were not legally connected to the water grid. In Gaza, 95 per cent of water had become unfit for human consumption.

49. A quarter of the Palestinian population in Gaza was unconnected to the sewage network and pollution levels were four times higher than the environmental health standard. Every day, 108 million litres of raw or poorly treated waste water were discharged into the Mediterranean Sea, and 73 per cent of the shoreline was contaminated by sewage.

50. Some 2.5 million Palestinians, roughly half of the population, needed humanitarian assistance. Eighty per cent of the population in Gaza relied on aid and lived on a per capita gross domestic product lower than the 1994 level. The unemployment and poverty rates in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, were very high. In 2016, one third of the population had been food insecure, a rate that was higher in Gaza and refugee camps. The population that received food aid from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East had increased from approximately 80,000 people in 2000 to more than 993,000 people in 2017.

51. The Gaza blockade coupled with intra-Palestinian division had led to a sharp deterioration in the availability and quality of health care and a shortage of medical staff, supplies, machines, drugs and disposables. A total of 260,000 Palestinians relied on humanitarian health care owing to the fragmentation of the West Bank, mobility restrictions and lack of infrastructure.

52. Israel actively supported illegal settlement activity in the occupied Syrian Golan, where, by 2017, an estimated 23,000 Israelis lived in 34 illegal settlements. The 25,000 Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan faced discriminatory policies relating to land and water allocation, planning and zoning, and demining efforts. The Israeli authorities restricted Syrian usage of land for farming to 45,000 acres, while Israeli settlers were allowed to use 350,000 acres. As a result, Syrian villages were overcrowded, had strained infrastructure and experienced harsh economic and social conditions.

53. The 51-year Israeli occupation had had a detrimental effect on the social and economic development of the people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. While humanitarian and development efforts were key to alleviating the suffering of the Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation, cycles of violence would not end until the roots of such violence were addressed. The United Nations maintained its long-standing position that a lasting and comprehensive peace could be achieved only through a negotiated, two-State solution, realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and Palestine.

54. **Ms. Shurbaji** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that there had been an improvement in the methods used to prepare the report (A/73/87-E/2018/69). Information provided by the Syrian Arab Republic had been taken into account and reference had been made to the situation faced by the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan. Information had also been drawn from a wider variety of sources. Israeli occupation practices were an integral part of the illegal settlement and annexation policies of Israel. Discriminatory laws were imposed on the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan, while illegal settlers enjoyed various advantages. The Israeli authorities attempted to control and exploit all natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, imposed their own education curricula and sought to suppress Syrian identity by imposing Israeli nationality on Syrian residents of the Golan.

55. Future reports should include a more precise legal description of the situation, pursuant to the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981). While the authors of the report described practices in violation of international humanitarian law, such as the appropriation of land, restrictions on planning and construction, and the unjust allocation of water for Syrian farmers by Israel, they failed to condemn them explicitly or state the Organization's official position on them. One of the most serious of those practices had been the announcement by the Israeli Interior Ministry that, for the first time since 1967, elections would be held in four towns in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights on 30 October 2018, in clear violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981). The Palestinians and Syrians living under Israeli occupation needed the United Nations to demand respect for international law and agreements. Furthermore, the report did not mention the arrests and imprisonment of Syrians living in the occupied Syrian Golan, dozens of whom remained in Israeli prisons. Lastly, it should be noted that Israeli forces had recently been involved in transferring members of the so-called White Helmets, an organization linked to the Nusrah Front, to a third country. The Council must take a firm stance in denouncing all such practices; otherwise the goal of "leaving no one behind" would not be achieved and the 2030 Agenda would not be implemented.

56. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Observer for Israel) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed, but unfortunately not surprised, by the report, which was full of shameless bias and presented a deliberately distorted picture of the situation on the ground. The report failed to mention the many important areas in which the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel successfully collaborated to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people, including through joint projects on energy, telecommunications, trade, agriculture and employment. For example, there had been a groundbreaking agreement on debt settlement and the sale of electricity, and a trilateral arrangement with Jordan and Japan for a train-the-trainer programme to teach Palestinian agriculture instructors the latest methods of efficient agricultural protection. Israeli high-tech companies were also hiring Palestinian software engineers who worked remotely from home. Those examples did not fit the script that had already been written. The report blamed Israel for all the problems in Palestine and disregarded the fact that the Palestinian Authority had refused to join the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee and repeatedly postponed decisions on proposals to improve water infrastructure.

57. Furthermore, Hamas was never mentioned in the report despite the fact that it was an internationally

recognized terrorist group that ruled Gaza and still controlled the Palestinians through fear and violence, denying them basic human rights. The authors of the report had also ignored the fact that during the reporting period the number of rockets fired by Hamas had been the highest in four years. Those omissions were highly relevant to the subject of the report and the authors' obvious and deliberate bias must not be ignored. The well-being of the Palestinian people was a serious issue that must be treated seriously.

58. The section of the report on the occupied Syrian Golan was even more absurd. The authors had chosen to base themselves on inaccurate information provided by a murderous Syrian regime that the international community had found responsible for gassing its own people. It was ironic that Israel was targeted in the report though it had been providing humanitarian aid to Syrian civilians and had recently helped rescue 400 volunteers of the Syrian humanitarian non-governmental organization known as the White Helmets, whose lives had been threatened by the Syrian regime simply for providing assistance to their war-torn communities.

59. The report was thus just another example of the ongoing one-sided and inflammatory attacks against Israel at the United Nations, which provided a platform for the Palestinians to win cheap political points instead of helping their own people.

60. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Palestine did cooperate with Israel, as prisoners cooperated with their jailer. Within the joint committees mentioned, Israel had given itself a veto right; the rights and development of an oppressed people were thus subject to the goodwill of its oppressors, contrary to the concept of self-determination. Delegations that had recently gained their independence would remember speeches being made about the generosity of colonizers in aiding their development. His delegation hoped that Israel would learn from history. Nothing could compensate a people for being prevented from living freely and in dignity on their own land.

61. An occupation was generally understood as temporary control by one party to a conflict over part or all of the territory of another party to that conflict, during armed hostilities. The rules and principles that existed to prevent the perpetuation of the situation included the principle of inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force, the principle that the occupant did not acquire sovereignty over the territory it occupied, the right of peoples to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and the obligation for the occupying Power to administer the occupied territory for the benefit of the local population. The Israeli occupation violated those rules since what the Israeli authorities sought was the annexation of the maximum land with the minimum Palestinian population, through the forcible transfer and confinement of the Palestinian people and the expansion of Jewish Israeli settlements. By doing so, Israel was undermining the contiguity of the Palestinian territory and taking control of most of its natural resources. Its illegal colonial occupation was being administered for the benefit of the colonizers rather than for the occupied people. That situation, coupled with discrimination based on religion and origin, as demonstrated by the adoption of the Israeli "Jewish nation-state law", was reminiscent of apartheid.

62. As indicated in the report before the Council (A/73/87-E/2018/69), the application of two different legal systems in the same territory, on the sole basis of nationality or origin, was discriminatory and violated the principle of equality before the law. The report also correctly indicated that Israeli planning and zoning policies were discriminatory and incompatible with international law. Their objective was to allow settlements to flourish at the expense of the Palestinian State. The economic and social repercussions of such a colonial regime were far-reaching and affected all Palestinian rights, including the right to life, political and civil rights, economic and social rights, access to environment and technology and the ability to build on Palestinian land.

63. The Palestinian economy was undermined by restrictions on movement and access. The Palestinian people faced forcible displacement, home demolitions, arbitrary detention, unlawful killing and injury, with many in Gaza suffering permanent disabilities after being shot during participation in a peaceful protest against the Israeli occupation and blockade. Gaza was on the brink of collapse. The decade-long blockade and repeated military aggressions had placed pressure on infrastructure and caused the loss of livelihoods, while the population's coping capacities, hopes and dreams had been depleted. The Jordan Valley, the most fertile part of the Palestinian territory, was off limits for Palestinians but available to Israeli companies, which were selling the products made from those Palestinian resources on international markets.

64. The Security Council had called on States to distinguish between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. His delegation urged all States to uphold their responsibilities to respect international law through non-recognition of and non-assistance for illegal actions and through advancing accountability, including by ensuring that their

Governments, companies and citizens were not complicit with the Israeli occupation and violations.

65. The Palestinian people had demonstrated their resilience for over seven decades. Despite hardships, they were creative, able, educated and had an entrepreneurial spirit. If not for the occupation, they would thrive through innovation, tourism, industry, arts and sports. A free Palestine, which would be sovereign, in control of its resources and no longer dependent on aid, would transform the region. That objective deserved the complete dedication of States as much as the worsening reality deserved outrage and opposition.

66. Palestine was committed to international law without discrimination or exception, believed in a rules-based order and was against the unlawful killing of civilians. It was also against the transfer of the population of the occupying Power into the occupied territory and against any forcible transfer. It was against the withholding of bodies and arbitrary detention. It doubted the capacity of Israel to make the same pronouncements in view of its attacks on Palestinian civilians and the hundreds of Palestinian bodies withheld, preventing families from being able to bury them in dignity. The military courts of Israel had a conviction rate of 99 per cent for Palestinians. The judicial system had exerted its power to detain members of parliament, human rights defenders, children and women and its integrity had been seriously questioned by United Nations experts and B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization. He called on all delegations to vote in favour of draft resolution E/2018/L.19, which was grounded in international law, and to reject any amendment which would perpetuate a biased, incomplete narrative of the conflict.

Draft resolution E/2018/L.19: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

67. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

68. **Mr. El Ashmawy** (Observer for Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced the draft resolution. He said that, while most paragraphs were similar to those in the previous year's resolution, some updates reflected the current realities on the ground.

69. Since the issuance of the draft resolution, paragraph 14 had been revised to read: "Calls for urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplores the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions".

70. The Group looked forward to the adoption by consensus of the draft resolution, as orally revised, in order to send a message to the occupying Power and help alleviate the economic and social hardships of the Palestinian and Syrian civilian populations, ultimately contributing to international efforts to bring an end to the injustice.

71. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, requested clarification from the President on whether the observer for Egypt was proposing an amendment.

72. **The President** asked the observer for Egypt to clarify whether he was proposing a revision or an amendment.

73. **Mr. El Ashmawy** (Observer for Egypt) said that he was proposing a revision.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

74. **The President** asked whether the Council wished to consider the oral revision proposed by the observer for Egypt.

75. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), said that her delegation objected to the Council's consideration of the proposed oral amendment, on the grounds that it had not been properly circulated in advance. Under rule 54 of the Council's rules of procedure, amendments — whether they were called revisions or amendments — must be circulated to all members at least 24 hours before they were to be discussed or put to the vote, unless the Council decided otherwise. Member States should consider the consequences of disregarding that rule, which gave members of the Council the opportunity to review and consider the substance of proposed amendments.

76. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in the absence of consensus among Council members regarding whether the Council should consider a proposal, the correct procedure was to vote on the issue.

77. **The President** suggested that the meeting should be suspended to allow for the circulation of the proposed

revision, in line with advice received from the Office of Legal Affairs. The Council would then vote on whether to consider the proposed revision at the current meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 12.25 p.m.

78. **The President** said that the proposed oral revision had been circulated in writing and that the Council would proceed to vote on whether to consider that proposal at the current meeting. A recorded vote had been requested.

79. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that her delegation continued to object to the consideration of the proposed oral amendment. Rule 54 of the Council's rules of procedure allowed the Council's elected members an opportunity to form their position on the substance of a proposed amendment. If certain States, or non-member entities, were permitted to violate the Council's rules of procedure with impunity, then chaos would ensue. In the interest of good governance and transparency, the proposed amendment should not be considered by the Council at the current meeting.

80. It was also a matter of concern that certain member States that normally strongly condemned terrorism by Hamas, seemed to be involved in proposing the said amendment, which appeared to have been concocted by unaccountable entities that were neither States Members of the United Nations nor members of the Council. Her delegation urged all member States to reject such manipulations, which undermined the integrity of the Council's working methods. Furthermore, if current actions were indicative of the manner in which the Palestinian delegation intended to exercise the presidency of the Group of 77 and China, which it was poised to assume in 2019, then that Group should reconsider its choice of leadership. Sadly, it fell upon the United States to defend the integrity of the Council and its working methods. The United States would defend the rights of member States to be given proper notice of substantive changes to texts and urged all Council members to stand up for their rights in that regard. Finally, she noted that the Israeli delegation had followed the rules of procedure by submitting its own amendment 24 hours in advance.

81. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that it was important not to mischaracterize the proposed revision, which was in fact an effort by the Group of 77 and China to achieve compromise. It should be noted that Israel — which also was not an elected member of the Council — had asked members to oppose the draft resolution even if the amendment it had circulated was approved. Unfortunately, neither Israel nor the United States had been willing to compromise or engage in negotiations. The Group, in contrast, had taken note of the substance of the Israeli amendment and, where the issues were in line with international law, it had discussed them with other partners before revising its own text in an effort of compromise. It was not the first time an oral revision had been presented on the day of the vote; that happened repeatedly at the United Nations, especially when last-minute efforts were made to achieve compromise. He therefore called on all Council members to support the consideration of the proposed revision and to recognize the value of open dialogue that allowed for such compromises to emerge even in the last hours before a vote was to be held.

82. **Mr. Danon** (Observer for Israel) said that the current attempt to bypass the rules of procedure was unfortunate. The amendment proposed by the Group of 77 and China did not address the issue at stake, which was that Hamas was holding Israeli civilians, without releasing information on their whereabouts, and preventing proper burial of Israeli soldiers. It was therefore Hamas that must be named in the draft resolution.

83. *A recorded vote was taken on whether to consider the oral revision to draft resolution E/2018/L.19 at the current meeting.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guyana, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

United States of America.

Abstaining:

Canada, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda.

84. *The Council decided, by 40 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions, to consider the oral revision to draft resolution E/2018/L.19 at the current meeting.*

85. **Mr. López Ortiz** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that European Union members of the Council would support the draft resolution with the understanding that the use of the term "Palestine"

should not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine. In addition, such usage was without prejudice to the individual positions of European Union member States on that issue and, consequently, on the question of validity of an accession to the conventions and treaties mentioned in the draft resolution. Moreover, the European Union had not expressed a legal qualification with respect to the use of the term "forced displacement" in the draft resolution and had not expressed itself on the use of certain legal terms therein. In addition, the European Union and its member States understood the term "Palestinian Government" to refer to the Palestinian Authority.

86. The European Union had worked in an open, transparent and constructive manner in negotiating the draft resolution, and had suggested amendments to improve the text while addressing the legitimate concerns of both sides. The European Union believed that the current revised version of the draft resolution was a balanced reflection of the negotiations. It would therefore abstain on any separate additional amendment on which the Council might be asked to vote. With that understanding, the European Union supported the revised draft resolution and the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote in favour of it.

87. **Mr. Danon** (Observer for Israel), introducing the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27, said that draft resolution E/2018/L.19 was one of the many anti-Israel resolutions submitted every year at the United Nations. While the draft resolution mentioned Gaza at length, it failed to mention the grave humanitarian crimes committed by Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization that continued to hold hostage two Israeli civilians, Abera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed, both of whom had mental health problems, and refused to return the abducted bodies of two Israeli soldiers, Hadar Goldin and Oron Shaul. His delegation therefore wished to insert, in the draft resolution, an amendment that was of a humanitarian nature and fell under the Council's mandate. He called on all Council members to support the amendment, since failure to mention Hamas and to call for the release of the Israelis held in Gaza would detract from the Council's legitimacy.

88. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27.

89. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Israel would have a stronger argument if it was not withholding dozens of Palestinian bodies, in a policy that had been applied for years and was permitted under Israeli law. All withheld bodies should be released, as was called for in the revision to the draft resolution.

90. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of the vote before the voting, said that the draft resolution made no mention of the actions of Hamas, which did nothing to better the lives of the Palestinian people and served to make such improvements impossible, owing to the ongoing commitment of Hamas to the destruction of the State of Israel. The Council should, at the very least, hold Hamas accountable for keeping prisoners. Her delegation, which called on Hamas to return Israeli soldiers and civilians to their families immediately, would vote in support of the Israeli amendment. All member States should make it clear where they stood with regard to Hamas by also voting in favour of the amendment.

91. *A recorded vote was taken on the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27.*

In favour:

Canada, Colombia, Mexico, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chad, Ecuador, Guyana, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Belgium, Chile, China, Czechia, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

92. *The amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27 was rejected by 18 votes to 5, with 23 abstentions.*

93. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Turkey had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/2018/L.19.

94. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised.

95. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that her delegation was disappointed at the presentation of a one-sided and biased draft resolution and was unable to support it. It was also very concerned at the decidedly anti-Israel bias within ESCWA, which was apparent in its report and in the draft resolution; such

bias did nothing to advance the aspirations of the Palestinians and Israelis for a more secure, peaceful and prosperous future together. The draft resolution and the report were unbalanced and unfairly singled Israel out in a forum that should not be politicized. The document would serve only to inflame both sides of the conflict and complicate the shared goal of peace.

96. The United States shared with many members of the international community the goal of a lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and the Palestinians. A comprehensive agreement that ended the conflict could be achieved only through direct bilateral negotiations. Resolutions, reports and proceedings such as those seen at the present meeting were so consistently biased and counterproductive that they had no place in the discourse and would only delay the day when Israel and the Palestinians could peacefully coexist.

97. Billions of dollars had been invested in Gaza, yet, as the report itself noted, over half the population still lived below the poverty line. Rather than blaming Israel in resolution after resolution at the United Nations, perhaps ESCWA should look at the primary culprit, Hamas, which needed to acknowledge that the existence of Israel was a permanent reality and that the Palestinian Authority was the legitimate governing body in the Gaza Strip. Hamas should stop diverting funds intended for infrastructure to the purchase of weapons or other nefarious uses, and work towards peace and the prosperity of its own citizens rather than nursing its sense of grievance and victimhood.

98. The United States stood ready to help foster economic security and would work with all parties to improve conditions and promote the cause of peace. However, resolutions such as the one before the Council did nothing to advance that goal. Her delegation therefore had no choice but to vote against the draft resolution.

99. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

Canada, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Rwanda.

100. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised, was adopted by 45 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

101. **Mr. Zalyalov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the basis of the principled position of the Russian Federation regarding a Middle East settlement. However, it had abstained on the amendment proposed by Israel, which did not belong in the draft resolution.

102. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that his Government was committed to the two-State solution and was opposed to provocations that caused delays and made the likelihood of a resolution to the conflict remoter than ever. The answer to bloodshed was not more bloodshed. The Philippines shared the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to achieve sustainable economic development but also espoused the sovereign right of all States to protect themselves. There were over two million Filipinos working in the Middle East and his Government was profoundly concerned for their safety and that of all those affected.

103. Stability and progress depended on a peaceful solution but any proposed solution must first and foremost be found within in the region and between the two parties. A lasting solution could not be imposed from the outside, either unilaterally or multilaterally. Every effort must be made to find a working solution, to stop provocations and to make the world a safer and more prosperous place.

104. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) thanked delegations for their principled support of a draft resolution grounded in international law. He said that United Nations resolutions and international law were sometimes portrayed as an obstacle to peace, but if violations of international law were accepted, it would mean the end of the world system established after 1945. The Second World War and its horrors, including the Holocaust, had shown that international law was essential.

105. The draft resolution was not anti-Israel; it opposed colonialism and upheld the right to self-determination. Israel had chosen to become a colonial power; if it made a different choice, which the international community should certainly urge and compel it to do, the attitude and the resolutions would be very different. The only possible stance the United Nations could take was to oppose colonialism and support the right to self-determination. The same rules must apply to all. The

path to peace was not to sacrifice international law in order to shield Israeli colonialism; rather, it was to uphold international law and allow all peoples in the region to live in freedom, in dignity and in peace. He hoped that one day all Palestinians would enjoy all the rights enshrined in the resolutions and would no longer need to speak of rights of which they were deprived. Until that day, it was the responsibility of the international community to reaffirm those rights, to help Palestine defend them and to hold the violators accountable. Palestine had its flaws but that could never serve as a justification for continued oppression, since the Palestinian people was entitled to self-determination. It was only fair and just for Palestine and Israel to be held accountable to the same standards as each other and everyone else.

106. **Ms. Furman** (Observer for Israel) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed at the Council's rejection of the crucial amendment presented by her delegation. There was no justification for not supporting a humanitarian call for the release of Israeli civilians and the abducted bodies of fallen Israeli soldiers. By refusing to support the amendment, the Council had denied the rights of the mothers of Abera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed to know the fate of their sons and the rights of the mothers of Hadar Goldin and Oron Shaul to give their sons a proper burial. The draft resolution was yet another example of the one-sided and inflammatory campaign against Israel at the United Nations. Over the years, the Palestinians had seized on any convenient platform to exploit the United Nations system and score cheap political points, which were apparently more valuable than working towards meaningful improvement in the lives of the Palestinian people.

107. While it emphasized the dire conditions in the Gaza Strip, the draft resolution did not even mention that Gaza was controlled by the terrorist organization Hamas, through violence, repression, the denial of basic human rights and the misuse of economic resources. Incredibly, no mention at all was made of Hamas in the draft resolution. The fact that the Palestinian leadership had never taken responsibility for the welfare of its own people was also ignored. Instead, the Palestinian Authority was commended for improving governance, the rule of law and human rights. In reality, the Palestinian leadership excelled mainly in corruption. It continued to incite enmity against Israel on a daily basis and instil hatred and extremism in the hearts and minds of the Palestinian youth.

108. It was time for the members of the Council to realize that the draft resolution did not enhance cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians or improve the lives of the Palestinians. Her delegation was therefore truly sorry that it had been adopted.

109. **Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez** (Uruguay) said that the draft resolution was a reminder of a problem that must be given urgent attention and of the grave needs of the Palestinian people, which should remain on the Council's agenda. Regarding the paragraphs on the release of prisoners and the return of bodies, Uruguay had supported both the Israeli amendment and the oral revision on the basis that it was crass to be haggling over prisoners and bodies. It was offensive and even immoral that there was not already agreement on that point. In addition, Uruguay had no objection to naming the groups that stubbornly refused to return the bodies of people who had inadvertently crossed borders. That had been his delegation's constant position as a member of the Security Council and in other forums where the issue had been discussed. For consistency, therefore, Uruguay had supported all the proposed changes to the draft resolution that referred to improving the condition of prisoners or to the return of prisoners or bodies.

110. **Mr. Mustafa** (Sudan) said that his country had voted in favour of the draft resolution, in line with its historical position that the Palestinian people had the right to a viable State with East Jerusalem as its capital, and in order to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Absolute support for the Palestinian people meant supporting freedom, human rights and the right to self-determination, and especially the right of the Palestinians to live in dignity in an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital, pursuant to the relevant United Nations resolutions.

111. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/73/84-E/2018/72).

112. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

United Nations E/2018/SR.51

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Fourth coordination and management meeting

Summary record of the 51st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 24 July, at 3 p.m.

President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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Conclusion of the 2018 session of the Council

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18-12333 (E)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 17: Non-governmental organizations (*continued*) (E/2018/32 (Part II) and E/2018/L.29)

1. **Mr. Grout-Smith** (United Kingdom) said that civil society organizations had an important role to play in all aspects of work of the United Nations, and their participation should be encouraged. Accordingly, the United Kingdom was concerned about reprisals against organizations and individuals for attending United Nations activities, and it attached particular importance to the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. It also took very seriously the Council's role of considering and deciding on the Committee's recommendations.

2. During its resumed session, the Committee had not had time to reconsider the applications of organizations that had responded to questions during the initial session or even to finish its review of the quadrennial reports. In view of its increased work load, it was essential for the Committee to improve its work methods for the review of the quadrennial reports, which was drawing valuable time away from the consideration of applications for consultative status.

3. Once again, there had been blatant and repeated discrimination against requesting organizations with a human rights focus. Accredited non-governmental organizations should reflect the full spectrum of issues considered by the United Nations, including the fundamental pillar of human rights.

4. Welcoming the inaugural consultations between the Committee and civil society, he noted the high level of attendance, the range of good suggestions and the clear desire of the civil society participants to be more involved. The United Kingdom looked forward to future dialogues before each session of the Committee and hoped that the recommendations generated would be integrated into the work of the Committee and the Organization as a whole. Given the recent successful use of video teleconferencing, it should also be employed during the Committee's question-and-answer sessions to enable the participation of non-governmental organizations that could not afford to send representatives to New York.

Draft decision E/2018/L.29: Application of the non-governmental organization Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

5. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

6. **Mr. Licharz** (Germany), introducing the draft decision, said that throughout its more than 60-year history, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had demonstrated its full commitment to the Charter of the United Nations. The foundation was well established and well regarded throughout the world. It was already working with the United Nations on civic education and sustainable development and had established a New York office expressly to facilitate cooperation. Having consultative status would allow it to contribute even more effectively to the work of the Organization. He reminded delegations that the purpose of the Council was to promote the well-being of all and urged those opposed to accrediting the foundation to set aside narrow, self-serving interests.

7. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) said that Canada, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Japan, Liechtenstein, Norway and the Republic of Moldova wished to become sponsors.

8. **Mr. Shulgin** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation was especially disheartened by the increasing trend to push through consultative status for organizations. The value of civil society organizations lay in their independence from States and their ability to make objective and impartial contributions.

9. The application of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had been under consideration for an unusually brief time, and the foundation's representatives had not had the opportunity to respond in depth to the questions from the experts. Furthermore, non-members of the Committee, who represented the majority of the Council, did not have sufficient information to assess its conclusions. During the resumed session, the Russian Federation had advocated extending the open dialogue to avoid making a hasty decision. Under paragraph 8 of Council resolution 1996/31, States had the right to receive information of interest to them from organizations requesting consultative status, which allowed the Committee to make an informed decision and to treat all applicants on an equal footing.

10. In view of the Committee's recommendations, the short period of consideration and the lack of information, his delegation moved to adjourn the debate in accordance with rule 50 of the Council's rules of procedure.

11. **The President** said that since the representative of the Russian Federation had moved that no action should be taken on draft decision E/2018/L.29, she would, in accordance with rule 50 of the rules of procedure, give the floor to a maximum of two representatives favouring the motion to adjourn and two opposing it, after which the motion would immediately be put to a vote.

12. **Mr. Guang** Cha (China) said that it was a matter of concern that some countries had been pushing to overrule the Committee's decisions. The Committee had the right to question and receive answers from organizations requesting consultative status. The Council should respect the Committee's mandate and uphold its decisions. On that basis, his delegation seconded the no-action motion.

13. **Mr. Licharz** (Germany) said that the participation of civil society organizations was crucial to the work of the United Nations. If Member States could not discuss the issues of accreditation in the Council, where could they? Throughout the accreditation process, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had diligently answered all questions, and no substantial evidence had emerged to indicate that it did not meet all the requirements of Council resolution 1996/31. The Russian motion clearly showed that the delegations opposing its accreditation had run out of arguments. After lengthy consultations, the time had come to take a decision. He urged all members of the Council to reject the motion.

14. **Mr. Poveda Brito** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), noting the valuable role of non-governmental organizations in the United Nations system, said that his delegation remained concerned at the Council's selective disregard for recommendations of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. The recommendations in the Committee report should be accepted as a whole in order not to undermine its mandate. Furthermore, a number of Committee members had expressed a need for a longer period of time to consider the application, in keeping with the usual practic His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the no-action motion.

15. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America) said that Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung was a well-known and highly regarded foundation that would contribute significantly to the Council's work and met the criteria for consultative status set out in Council resolution 1996/31. As a matter of principle, the United States generally opposed no-action motions, which were misused to prevent action on important issues. The draft decision to grant consultative status to Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had been submitted in compliance with the Committee's rules of procedure, and Member States had had more than enough time to consider it. Her delegation would vote against the motion, and it called on others to do the same.

16. *A recorded vote was taken on the motion by the Russian Federation to take no action on draft decision E/2018/L.29.*

In favour:

Belarus, China, Guyana, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Korea (Republic of), Japan, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Norway, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Spain, Togo, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Benin, Ecuador, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, United Arab Emirates.

17. *The no-action motion was rejected by 27 votes to 10, with 7 abstentions.*

18. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on draft decision E/2018/L.29.

Statements made in explanation of vote before the voting

19. **Mr. Muchka** (Czechia), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union supported the draft decision. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung was a political foundation with more than 90 offices and 200 projects worldwide. In 2017, it had opened an office in New York exclusively to contribute to the work of the United Nations and to engage its partners around the world in discussions with the United Nations.

20. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had submitted its application for consultative status in May 2016. Since then the Director of the New York office had met frequently with the Committee to answer questions, and the foundation had also submitted written responses. Nevertheless, the Committee had once again voted not to recommend it for consultative status.

21. All applications for consultative status should be considered in a transparent manner and without undue delay. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung met all the criteria for accreditation set out in Council resolution 1996/31. The States members of the European Union would vote in

favour of the draft decision, and they urged other States to do the same.

22. **Ms. Rodríguez** (Observer for Cuba) said that the Mexican office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had publicly declared its intent to undermine her country's constitutional order, in flagrant violation of the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Director of that office maintained relations with individuals, including a confessed terrorist, who were paid by a foreign Government to promote political instability in Cuba. Furthermore, the organization had violated proper procedure by not responding to the Committee's questions. In view of the Committee's well-founded decision not to recommend Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung for consultative status, she urged Council members to vote against the draft decision.

23. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America) said that it was regrettable that granting consultative status to such a clearly qualified organization should be so difficult. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung was a well-known and highly regarded foundation with the stated aim of contributing to the work of the United Nations in a number of important areas, including implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, peacekeeping and migration.

24. The Committee's membership was stacked with countries whose hostility to civil society was well documented. Session after session, non-governmental organizations working in the field of human rights faced delaying tactics and endless redundant questions from members that simply did not like them and opposed them for political reasons, regardless of their qualifications. Her delegation urged the Council to support the participation of qualified organizations by voting to grant Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung consultative status.

25. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico), speaking on a point of order, said that he would like to know which delegation had requested a recorded vote.

26. **The President** said that the delegations of China and the Russian Federation had requested the recorded vote.

27. *A recorded vote was taken on draft decision E/2018/L.29.*

In favour:

Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Korea (Republic of), Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Moldova (Republic of), Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Romania, Rwanda, Spain, Togo, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

China, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Venezuela, Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, India, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates.

28. *Draft decision E/2018/L.29 was adopted by 28 votes to 8, with 11 abstentions.*

29. **Ms. Nguyen** Lien Huong (Viet Nam), reiterating her country's support for the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the work of the United Nations, said that the Council needed to respect, preserve and promote the important role of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, which had a responsibility to ask any questions needed to clarify the aims, purposes and activities of organizations seeking consultative status. Her delegation had followed the consideration of the application from the outset. Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung had been operating in Viet Nam since 1992, and it enjoyed a warm relationship with the Government. Viet Nam had therefore very much hoped that it would respond to the questions in due course. However, because the legitimate concerns of Committee members remained unaddressed, her delegation had voted with regret against granting it consultative status.

30. **Ms. Bakuramutsa** (Rwanda) said that, having listened to the concerns of Cuba, her delegation had nevertheless voted to grant Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung consultative status on the basis of its work in her country. Civil society could play an important role in helping Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda, particularly at the local level. However, non-governmental organizations granted consultative status with the Council should focus solely on social and economic development, in accordance with the Council's mandate, and should remain apolitical and non-partisan.

Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 resumed session (E/2018/32 (Part II))

31. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft decisions contained in chapter I of the report.

Draft decision I: Applications for consultative status, requests for reclassification and requests for a change of name received from non-governmental organizations

32. *Draft decision I, as amended by the adoption of draft decision E/2018/L.29, was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Request for acknowledgement of merger

Draft decision III: Requests for withdrawal of consultative status received from three non-governmental organizations

Draft decision IV: Suspension of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations with outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision V: Reinstatement of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations that submitted outstanding quadrennial reports, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision VI: Withdrawal of the consultative status of non-governmental organizations, pursuant to Council resolution 2008/4

Draft decision VII: Dates and provisional agenda of the 2019 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Draft decision VIII: Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 resumed session

33. *Draft decisions II, III, IV, V, VI, VII and VIII were adopted.*

Agenda item 15: Regional cooperation (E/2018/15, E/2018/15/Add.1, E/2018/17, E/2018/18, E/2018/19 and E/2018/20)

34. **Mr. Nour** (Director of the Regional Commissions New York Office), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2018/15 and E/2018/15/Add.1), said that the first part of the report highlighted the central role of the regional commissions in facilitating national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As think tanks, they provided policy advocacy, research and analysis, encapsulated in multiple reports on 2030 Agenda issues. As conveners, they held sessions that offered a platform for multisectoral regional cooperation on the Sustainable Development Goals, held high-level conferences and organized the regional forums on sustainable development, which were the culmination of numerous, intense regional processes initiated by the commissions. In their operational function, they provided technical support, advisory services and capacity-building in areas such as transboundary issues, regional norms and standards, macroeconomics, financing for development, statistics and South-South cooperation.

35. The second part of the report covered regional and interregional cooperation. At their sessions that year, the regional commissions had focused on themes of particular importance for their regions. The Regional Coordination Mechanisms were now meeting jointly or back to back with the regional teams of the United Nations Development Group, and interregional cooperation had increased substantially in areas such as energy, trade and road safety. The regional commissions would continue to participate in the efforts to reposition the United Nations development system.

36. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean played a key role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, not only as a think tank but also as the organizer of the regional forum for sustainable development, whose work was essential to that of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. He wished to know if there had been any progress on the proposals for revamping the regional approach. He would also appreciate the Director's comments on the time allocated during the high-level forum for presentations by the Ministerial Chairs of the regional forums, which had been too short to allow dialogue.

37. **Mr. Nour** (Director of the Regional Commissions New York Office) said that revamping the regional approach was about more than the regional commissions; it was about the agencies, funds and programmes and how they interacted. A number of internal teams were working with stakeholders within the United Nations system on how to optimize the regional architecture to improve support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, but progress had not been sufficient to report back to Member States.

38. As for the time allotted to the regional forums during the high-level political forum, he agreed that it was insufficient. Member States might wish to revise the forum schedule.

39. **Mr. Aguirre Vacchieri** (Chile) said that he was aware of an internal study on overlaps among the mandates of the regional commissions and the various agencies, funds and programmes. The Council might like to see it as soon as possible. He had heard of proposals to cut regional commission staffing, which would be a matter of great concern.

Action on the recommendations contained in the addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2018/15/Add.1)

40. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft resolutions contained in chapter I, sections A, B and C, of the report.

Section A

Draft resolution: Admission of French Guiana as an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Section B

Draft resolution I: African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

Draft resolution II: New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa

Draft resolution III: Venue of the fifty-second session of the Economic Commission for Africa

Section C

Draft resolution: Transition of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture to an intergovernmental organization outside the United Nations system

41. *The draft resolutions were adopted.*

42. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2018/15 and E/2018/15/Add.1) and the notes by the Secretary-General regarding the economic situation in the Economic Commission for Europe region (Europe, North America and the Commonwealth of Independent States), 2017–2018 (E/2018/16), the overview of economic and social conditions in Africa, 2018 (E/2018/17), the summary of the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2018 (E/2018/18), the economic situation and outlook for Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 2017–2018 (E/2018/19) and the economic and social developments in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia region for the period 2017–2018 (E/2018/20).

43. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 11: Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (*continued*)

(b) Review and coordination of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (*continued*) (E/2018/L.13 and E/2018/L.26)

Draft resolution E/2018/L.26: Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020

44. **The President** invited the Committee to take action on the draft resolution, which she had submitted on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution E/2018/L.13. The draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

45. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.26 was adopted.*

46. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.13 was withdrawn.*

47. **Ms. Kieran** (United States of America) said that although her delegation had joined the consensus on the draft resolution, she wished to clarify its position on the language relating to the 2030 Agenda. The Agenda was non-binding and did not create or affect rights or obligations under international law, nor did it give rise to financial commitments. It did, however, provide a global framework that could help countries work towards global peace and prosperity. The United States applauded its call for shared responsibility, including national responsibility, and the recognition that each country should implement the Agenda in accordance with its own national policies and priorities.

48. According to paragraph 18 of General Assembly resolution 70/1, implementation of the 2030 Agenda should be consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law, and according to paragraph 58, it should not prejudice the independent mandates of other processes, including negotiations, or serve as a precedent for decisions and actions in other forums. In other words, the Agenda did not represent a commitment to provide new market access for goods or services, nor did it interpret or alter any agreement or decision of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

49. Much of the trade-related language in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 had been overtaken by events and was irrelevant to ongoing work and negotiations

involving trade. Moreover, the United States disassociated itself from any reference to financial assistance related to the Technology Bank for the Least Development Countries or technology transfer that was not clearly both voluntary and mutually agreed. Any such paragraphs undermined intellectual property rights and would have no bearing on future United States negotiations.

50. In regard to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution, the United States was the single largest provider of official development assistance (ODA). It recognized that ODA was critical, particularly for low-income, fragile and conflict-affected countries, and it was committed to sustainable development for all. However, it had never agreed to the arbitrary ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI), which bore no relationship to demonstrated need or the ability of recipients to use aid effectively.

Agenda item 18: Economic and environmental questions (*continued*) (E/2018/L.22)

(a) Sustainable development (*continued*)

Draft resolution E/2018/L.22: Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its twentieth session

51. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

52. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.22 was adopted.*

53. **Mr. Sannabe** (Japan) said that, during the consultation process, his delegation had carefully reviewed the language of the draft resolution to ensure the consistency and integrity of the category of least developed countries, while taking into consideration specific challenges such as economic vulnerability and the impact of climate change. Japan appreciated the willingness of Bhutan to graduate from the category of least developed countries and had supported postponing its graduation for two years to enable it to align its transition strategy with its twelfth national development plan. Japan would provide support to ensure a smooth graduation and transition in accordance with that plan. It would also work closely with the countries recommended for graduation in the next review to ensure their smooth graduation, transition and further sustainable development.

54. **Mr. Kimmel** (United States of America) said that while many least developed countries, including small island developing States, had understandable concerns about graduating, his delegation was concerned that requests for extensions were becoming common and that the Council was increasingly granting extensions beyond the standard three years. The large number of extensions reduced the Council's credibility and discouraged meaningful development policy.

55. Additionally, certain elements of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway might no longer be implementable. In particular, the trade-related language in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 had been overtaken by events and was irrelevant to ongoing work and negotiations involving trade.

56. **Mr. Sisilo** (Observer for Solomon Islands), speaking on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum, said that the Forum countries appreciated the understanding shown by various delegations for the challenges specific to Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu as Pacific island least developed countries. Graduation was often likened to a cliff, and hard work was needed to ensure that graduating countries did not simply fall off it. Successful graduation took preparation and time, because graduating countries needed to institute a large number of new policies and sometimes legislative changes to remain globally competitive and maintain their development trajectory.

57. The metrics used to judge readiness for graduation were fragile. In the case of the Pacific island countries, the use of GNI per capita to judge economic growth had consistently masked development realities in an environment where ODA contributed a significant proportion of GNI and purchasing power was limited.

58. The Forum countries were pleased that the draft resolution avoided driving some countries off the cliff. However, they strongly believed that the criteria for graduation and the reporting process needed to be reconsidered. The countries identified for graduation had indicated that the metrics did not reflect their development reality, and no country to graduate had ever met the economic vulnerability index criteria. While it was important to ensure the integrity and credibility of the graduation criteria, applying them in a way that underestimated the remaining fundamental challenges would lead to the graduation of ill-prepared countries. They hoped that the 2021 review would focus on ensuring that all countries considered for graduation had a full understanding of the process and adequate opportunity for meaningful input.

59. With respect to Solomon Islands, which was a post-conflict country and did not meet the vulnerability index criteria, his delegation would consult with members of the Council and others on the best way to precede with graduation.

60. **Ms. Tshering** (Observer for Bhutan) said that her delegation was grateful for the Council's endorsement of the recommendation to graduate Bhutan from the category of least developed countries and for its agreement to align the effective graduation date with the conclusion of the twelfth five-year national development plan. Although Bhutan faced daunting challenges as a small landlocked country, it was committed to graduating in an irreversible manner.

(b) Science and technology for development
(A/73/66-E/2018/10 and E/2018/31)

61. **Mr. Gómez Ramírez** (Dominican Republic), Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, introducing the report of the Commission on Science and Technology on its twenty-first session (E/2018/31), said that the Commission had discussed the role of science and technology in the context of the 2030 Agenda and had reviewed progress on implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. In addition, it had considered two priority themes, held two ministerial round tables and analysed science, technology and innovation policies.

62. During its assessment of progress on implementing the outcomes of the World Summit, the Commission had reaffirmed the World Summit vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society and its understanding that the success of the 2030 Agenda would depend on increasing access to information and communications technology. In addition, it had welcomed the good progress made by the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, including the emergence of consensus on some issues, while expressing regret that it had not been able to issue recommendations for enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society.

63. During the its consideration of the first priority theme, "The role of science, technology and innovation in increasing substantially the share of renewable energy by 2030", the Commission had decided to urge Governments to increase support for research and development activities in renewable energy technologies and improve policy coordination and policy coherence. With regard to the second theme, "Building digital competencies to benefit from existing and emerging technologies, with a special focus on gender and youth dimensions", it had noted the need to help countries identify future capacity-building needs so that they could build the digital skills and competencies required to take advantage of the jobs and development opportunities created by new technologies.

64. The Commission had held two ministerial round tables, the first on the Council's 2018 theme, "From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural communities", and the second on the impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. During the first round table, Member States had shared experiences in using science, technology and innovation to provide clean water and sanitation, affordable, clean energy and quality education.

65. During its consideration of science, technology and innovation policies, the Commission had discussed the ongoing work on integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into the framework for national science, technology and innovation policy reviews, with a specific focus on bottom-of-the-pyramid approaches to innovation, and had held a panel discussion on the theme "New science, technology and innovation policy framework and approaches to finance innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals".

66. The Commission had adopted two draft resolutions, entitled "Science, technology and innovation for development" and "Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society".

67. Lastly, the Commission had selected "The impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development" and "The role of science, technology and innovation in building resilient communities, including through the contribution of citizen science" as the priority themes of its twenty-second session.

68. **Ms. Wu** (Chief of the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Section, Division on Technology and Logistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels (A/73/66-E/2018/10), said that that global use of mobile and broadband technologies continued to grow. However, in 2017, less than 20 per cent of the people in least developed countries had had access to the Internet, compared to more than 80 per cent in the developed world. The digital divide had also persisted within countries as well as between city and country, rich and poor, educated and less educated, young and old, and men and women. The proportion of women using the Internet was 12 per cent lower than the proportion of men in general, and, in the least developed countries, it was more than 30 per cent and growing. Policymakers needed to address the underlying factors, including

inadequate infrastructure, affordability of devices and services, and lack of awareness and relevant skills.

69. Developing countries, particularly least developed countries, were poorly prepared to take advantage of the many opportunities provided by the expanding digital economy. All countries should invest in digital infrastructure, digital skills and legal and regulatory frameworks that facilitated business innovation. It was particularly important to take steps to ensure that skills acquisition kept pace with changes in technology and markets. Countries and companies that invested in infrastructure and competencies were likely to benefit from new technologies, while those that lacked the necessary resources would not. In that light, policymakers should consider ways of addressing the impact of structural inequalities on inclusiveness and sustainability, including by giving additional support to developing countries.

70. Reliable measurement of the evolving digital economy was essential for the design and implementation of evidence-based policy. Big data analysis could prove useful, but it raised issues of privacy, data protection and cybersecurity that required further exploration. Furthermore, the ability of Governments to act on better data was limited by human capacity and financial resources. In that connection, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy had recently recommended the establishment of a working group on measuring e-commerce and the digital economy.

71. Increased reliance on the Internet and connected information technology systems had heightened vulnerability to cyberattacks. That would be exacerbated by the anticipated rapid expansion of the Internet of Things, especially in the absence of internationally agreed standards for connected devices. International attention had been focused on improving cybersecurity awareness and making products and services more secure, as well as on the need for multi-stakeholder cooperation to anticipate threats and respond to them rapidly.

Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology on its twenty-first session (E/2018/31)

72. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft resolutions contained in chapter I, section A, of the report.

Draft resolution I: Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

Draft resolution II: Science, technology and innovation for development

73. *The draft resolutions were adopted.*

74. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft decision contained in chapter I, section B, of the report.

Draft decision: Report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its twenty-first session and provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-second session of the Commission

75. *The draft decision was adopted.*

76. **Mr. Bagwell** (United States of America), expressing appreciation for all who had engaged constructively in negotiating a draft decision acceptable to all, said that he wished to clarify his delegation's position. Encouraging innovation required a system that fully protected intellectual property rights; advocated technology transfer only when voluntary and on mutually agreed terms; and embraced policies that afforded equal treatment and did not negatively affect economic interests. His delegation did not support the references to technology transfer, continued to oppose language that undermined intellectual property rights and was deeply concerned about language pertaining to trade, investment and intellectual property. Any effort in the United Nations to speak to ongoing or future WTO work, to reinterpret existing WTO rules and agreements or to undermine the independent mandate of WTO was unacceptable and irrelevant.

(h) International cooperation in tax matters (*continued*) (E/2018/45/Add.1)

77. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on its sixteenth session (E/2018/45/Add.1).

78. *It was so decided.*

Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on its sixteenth session

79. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft decision contained in chapter IV of report of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters on its sixteenth session (E/2018/45/Add.1).

Draft decision: Venue and dates of and provisional agenda for the seventeenth session of the Committee

80. *The draft decision was adopted.*

(i) Geospatial information (*continued*) (E/2018/L.25)

Draft decision E/2018/L.25: Rules of procedure of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and draft agenda for its first session

81. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

82. *Draft decision E/2018/L.25 was adopted.*

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(a) Reports of the coordination bodies (*continued*) (A/73/16 and E/2018/48)

83. **Mr. Varankov** (Belarus) said that his delegation attached great importance to the role of the Committee for Programme and Coordination in programme planning and evaluation, and in coordinating administrative and budgetary matters within the United Nations.

84. During the Committee's productive fifty-eighth session, the implementation of recommendations to improve the work of a number of important organizations within the United Nations system had been evaluated. Discussions had also been held on the programme performance of the United Nations and on the work of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

85. Among the positive outcomes of the session, Belarus particularly wished to note the contribution of the United Nations system towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the holistic approach to middle-income countries and the Secretariat's effective cooperation with States.

86. The Committee's role would continue to grow following the change to an annual budget in 2020. The next session of the Committee in 2019 would be key in determining its subsequent work in the context of the reform of the United Nations management system. It also provided a good opportunity to improve working methods. The Committee should therefore receive the necessary support in order to fully implement its mandate.

87. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on its fifty-eighth session (A/73/16) and the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2017 (E/2018/48).

88. *It was so decided.*

(g) Calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields (E/2018/L.21)

Draft resolution E/2018/L.21: Calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

89. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

90. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.21 was adopted.*

Agenda item 4: Elections, nominations, confirmations and appointments (*continued*) (E/2018/9)

Committee for Development Policy (E/2018/9/Add.15)

91. **The President** invited the Council to turn its attention to the list of candidates contained in the note by the Secretary-General on the appointment of 24 members of the Committee for Development Policy (E/2018/9/Add.15). She took it that the Council approved their nomination by the Secretary-General for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2022.

92. *It was so decided.*

Commission on Science and Technology for Development

93. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the outstanding vacancies on the Commission on Science and Technology for Development. She had been informed that Oman had been endorsed by the Asia-Pacific States, and Turkey by the Western European and other States, both for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2022. She took it that the Council wished to elect the candidates by acclamation.

94. *Oman and Turkey were elected members of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development by acclamation.*

95. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from the African States and three members from the Latin American and Caribbean States for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2022.

96. *It was so decided.*

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
(E/2018/9/Add.16)

97. **The President** said that the nomination of Ms. Karla Vanessa Lemus de Vásquez had been endorsed by the Latin America and Caribbean States for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2022. She took it that the Council wished to elect the candidate by acclamation.

98. *Ms. Lemus de Vásquez (El Salvador) was elected to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights by acclamation.*

99. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of one member from the Asia-Pacific States for a four-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2022.

100. *It was so decided.*

Committee for the United Nations Population Award
(E/2018/9/Add.12)

101. **The President** said that Liberia had been endorsed by the African States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2021. She took it that the Council wished to elect the candidate by acclamation.

102. *Liberia was elected to the Committee for the United Nations Population Award by acclamation.*

103. **The President** said that, in the absence of any other candidates for election to the Committee for the United Nations Population Award, she took it that the Council wished to postpone the election of two members from the African States, three members from the Asia-Pacific States, one member from the Eastern European States, two members from the Latin American and Caribbean States and one member from the Western European and other States for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2019 and ending on 31 December 2021.

104. *It was so decided.*

Conclusion of the 2018 session of the Council

105. **The President** declared that the Council had concluded its fourth coordination and management meeting and its 2018 session.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.